

# IRELAND'S BATTLES

## AND BATTLE FIELDS

By  
W.S. JOYCE



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IRELAND'S  
BATTLES AND BATTLEFIELDS.

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A SERIES OF ARTICLES  
BY  
WESTON ST. J. JOYCE

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## PREFACE.

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IN the following series of articles an endeavour has been made, without deference to sect or party, to truthfully delineate the leading battles fought on Irish soil from the Danish invasion down to modern times. From still earlier ages many great battles are recorded ; but in those remote periods history was to such an extent encroached upon, if not superseded, by fable and romance, as to render any detailed accounts almost valueless, except as legendary classics. Even in the Danish period, chroniclers appear to have possessed but a rudimentary appreciation of sober, truthful narrative. Bombastic and extravagant exaggeration was their prevailing characteristic, and it is rather in collateral and incidental issues than in the main narrative that we must seek for authentic details.

During the earlier portion of the Anglo-Norman period English historians are, as a rule, very prejudiced and untrustworthy ; but in the later Anglo-Irish wars, the official military despatches are calmly and intelligibly written, and, on the whole, are fair and truthful.

In the case of the Williamite wars the authorities are more conflicting than in any other Irish war ; but there are so many writers on this period, that a judicious examination of them cannot fail to elicit the truth as to this great dynastic struggle.

It will be observed that the Irish won most of the great battles till the Williamite wars. This may seem inconsistent with the continuity of English sovereignty in the country ; but it should be recollected that these battles did not follow one another with sufficient rapidity to have any very marked result, that in the innumerable minor conflicts the English were more frequently victorious, and that the Irish, during long periods of their history, were so busily engaged in petty inter-tribal warfare that they had no time to devote to fighting the invader.

The Danish war—the first dealt with in this series—ended at the battle of Clontarf, where the power of the fierce Vikings was crushed for ever in Ireland. A succession of petty dynastic wars occupied the attention of the country from that time till the ill-advised expedition of Robert Bruce, which left but little mark upon the sands of history, and terminated with the life of its unfortunate leader at the battle of Faughart hill in 1318.

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The war of Hugh O'Neill was the most serious revolt against their sovereignty with which the English ever had to contend. After a succession of victories leading up to the battle of the Yellow Ford, followed by the abortive campaign of Essex, the tide at length turned in favour of England, and the Irish, with their Spanish allies, in 1601, met with a ruinous defeat at Kinsale, which completely broke up their forces, and left the country paralysed for a considerable period.

From the insurrection of 1641 to the Confederate war and the close of Cromwell's campaign in 1650, the country was one constant scene of tumult and bloodshed, and the history of this period is extremely perplexing, owing to the strange complications and multiplicity of parties.

The Williamite struggle was the sequel of the great Revolution in England. James, renounced by his English subjects, found it convenient to espouse the cause of the Irish Catholics, and, with the aid of France, hoped, if not to regain the English throne, to at least establish an independent kingdom in Ireland. Throughout this campaign the individualities of the rival monarchs present a strong contrast, and there is little doubt that the great difference in their personal characters contributed largely to the issue of this momentous conflict, which closes the writer's detailed record of "Ireland's Battles and Battlefields," which are herewith republished from the columns of the *Evening Telegraph*.

June, 1888.

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# IRELAND'S BATTLES AND BATTLEFIELDS.

## THE DANISH WARS.

### THE BATTLES OF KILMASHOGUE, SULCOIT, AND GLENMAMA.



N 795 A.D. the Danes first visited Ireland. Though commonly called Danes, they came not only from Denmark proper, but also from Norway, Swe-

den, and in general from the islands and coasts of the Baltic. Finding that Ireland offered a fair field for plunder they soon came in larger numbers and organised a series of predatory expeditions, chiefly directed against the wealthy ecclesiastical establishments.

They continued these raids, with few reverses, up to about the year 838, when, under Turgesius, they established themselves in Dublin, where they erected a stronghold, probably on the hill now occupied by the Castle and Christ Church Cathedral.

Once established in Dublin they gradually extended their power, till in a few years a great part of the country groaned beneath the oppression of these ruthless barbarians.

From about 912 to 916 a constant succession of Danish fleets and expeditions poured into Waterford, taking possession of the town, such as it was then, during which time it is supposed by some that they built Reginald's Tower, still standing perfect on the quays. They then ravaged all south-eastern Munster, occupying every harbour and fortress of importance, and compelling the inhabitants to pay tribute,

In 916 they defeated the King of Leinster at Cenn Fuat, said to be Confey, near Leixlip, where fifty Irish chieftains were slain. Encouraged by these successes, another great reinforcement shortly afterwards arrived in Dublin and encamped in the neighbourhood. Niall Glunduff, King of Ulster, hearing of this fresh invasion, marshalled his troops and clansmen, and marched on Dublin to attack them. The Danes then retired to the mountains, probably to choose their ground, and on Wednesday, 15th September, 919, the opposing forces met at Kilmashogue Mountain, above Whitechurch, about six miles from Dublin, where an obstinate and bloody battle was fought, in which the Irish were disastrously defeated, brave King Niall, with twelve tributary Kings and a great number of the Ulster nobles, being numbered among the slain. From the strange site chosen for this battle in the mountains, then covered by primeval forests, it is not unlikely that the Irish were entrapped into an ambushade, as they were much less skilled in such artifices than their adversaries. The remains of a cromlech within the grounds of Glensouthwell, on the side of Kilmashogue Mountain, in all probability marks the spot where King Niall or some of these chieftains was buried after the battle. I incidentally referred to it in No. VI. of *Rambles Around Dublin*.

A year after this reverse the Irish had ample revenge, for they defeated the Danes with great slaughter at a place, unidentified, in the county Meath, where, in the words of the old chroniclers, "there escaped not more than enough to tell

what had happened; and there fell of the nobles of the Norsemen here as many as had fallen of the nobles and plebeians of the Gael (Irish) at the battle of Ath-eliath," meaning Kilmashogue.

By 960 a great part of Munster had fallen under the rule of the Danes, who levied blackmail and exacted ruinous taxes from the unfortunate inhabitants. Two illustrious chiefs of the Dalcassian tribe, Mahon and his younger brother Brian (afterwards the hero of Clontarf), resolved to raise an army and endeavour to free their country from the tyranny of the foreign yoke. Accordingly, taking all their people and goods with them, they crossed the Shannon westwards from Limerick, and went into the county Clare, where, from the fastnesses of the woods of Thomond, they harassed the enemy for a considerable period by a system of guerilla warfare. At length, after protracted disagreements and conferences between the brothers, the tribe decided upon assuming a more aggressive attitude, and resolved on open warfare. Ivar, King of the Limerick Danes, however, determined to forestall this move. He at once proclaimed a war of extermination against them, and from far and near the Danes of Munster, as well as many of the recreant Irish, flocked to his battle standard. Meanwhile the Dalcassians, under their two chieftains, had marched into Muskerry on the borders of Cork and Kerry, where they were joined by a number of adherents, and thence to Cashel of the Kings, where they encamped.

Ivar was now on the march from Limerick at the head of his army, and in a few days had pitched his tents at Sulcoit, now Solloghod, about three miles north-west of the present town of Tipperary and sixteen miles from Cashel. When news of this reached the Dalcassians, the chiefs and officers assembled together and held a council of war, at which it was unanimously decided to force the Danes into a general engagement at their camp at Sulcoit, which place was then covered with a thick fallow wood, in shelter of which they were encamped. The Dalcassians marched to within about five miles of Sulcoit, and next morning at sunrise formed in battle array, seeing which the Danes

advanced to meet them in the open. A furious battle then commenced, no quarter being given on either side; it raged till mid-day and resulted in a decisive and ruinous defeat of the Danes, for they were driven from the battlefield, whence "they fled to the ditches and the vallies, and the solitudes of that great sweet flowery plain," and were pursued till next morning by the victorious Irish even as far as the fortress of Limerick, a distance of twenty miles.

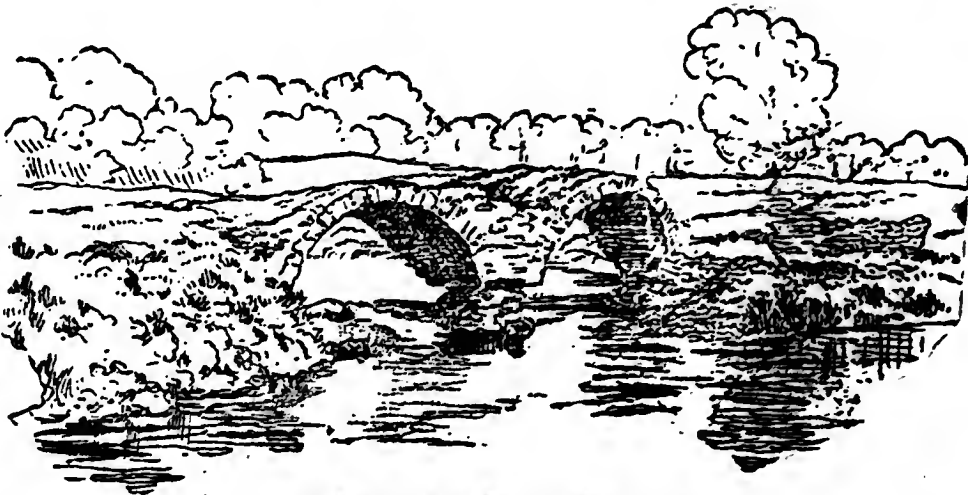
In the dreadful confusion of the retreat and pursuit the gates of Limerick were flung open to both victors and vanquished, the Danes being slaughtered by the Irish in the streets and in the houses, and thus this important fortress reverted to its rightful owners. It is recorded that the prisoners were collected on the hillocks of Saingel, now Singland, on the south bank of the Shannon, and part of the city of Limerick, where everyone that was fit for war was killed, and everyone that was fit for slavery was enslaved. Such was the common practice in these barbarous times. This great battle, which took place in the year 968, completely shattered the power of the Danes in Munster, the survivors of whom now entrenched themselves in Scattery Island, in the Shannon.

Mahon, now undisputed monarch of Munster, followed up the victory of Sulcoit by breaking up the isolated settlements of the Danes through the south, and compelling the wavering Irish chiefs to give him hostages. But the wily Danes, unable to meet him openly, now resolved on other means for ridding themselves of him. After about six years Ivar and his son organised a conspiracy for his assassination, in which they were basely joined, through motives of jealousy, by two powerful Munster chiefs—Donovan, lord of Hy Carberry, and Molloy, lord of Desmond, both of whom now publicly renounced their allegiance to Mahon. About the year 976 Mahon was induced on some pretext or other to visit Donovan at his house at Bruree, county Limerick, having previously received the guarantee of the local bishop and clergy that he would not be injured. Notwithstanding this solemn guarantee, given at his instance, Donovan sent on Mahon under escort to meet Molloy, according

to a prearranged plan, at the place selected for the murder. Molloy watched the assassination from a distance and waited till he saw the flashing of the sword in the hands of the murderer and Mahon fall under the blow, upon which he mounted his horse and precipitately fled the scene. It should be mentioned that the ecclesiastics in guaranteeing Mahon's safety acted in perfectly good faith throughout, having been deceived by Donovan and Molloy.

The Danes gained nothing by the murder of Mahon, for his brother Brian, a much more resolute and dangerous foe, now succeeded to the throne. He at once commenced a campaign against them, and Ivar and his son were both killed in Scatterry Island, within a year after the

gress, became alarmed, and after a conference effected a treaty with him by which the sovereignty of Ireland was divided equally between them. Shortly afterwards—about 999 or 1000 A.D.—the Irish of Leinster revolted and joined the Danes of Dublin in a war against Brian, who, collecting his forces, marched northwards to besiege Dublin. On his way he encamped at a place called Glen-Mama, or the Glen of the Gap, near Dunlavin, in county Wicklow, and thirty-two miles south-west of Dublin. Here he was joined by Malachy at the head of his troops. Meanwhile the Danes, who had marched from Dublin to intercept him, were approaching Dunlavin, where they intended to encamp. Their way lay through Glenmama, but on entering the



HORSEPASS BRIDGE ON THE LIFFEY.

murder. Next year he attacked and defeated an army under Donovan and the surviving son of Ivar, both of whom were killed in the engagement. Of his brother's murderers there now remained but Molloy to be dealt with. Brian sent him a peremptory challenge by a special envoy to meet him at the scene of the murder, adding that if it were not accepted within a fortnight the Dalcassians, led by himself, would attack him in his own stronghold. This brought on the battle of Belach Lechta, in which Molloy and 1,200 of his troops were killed, and the murder of Mahon, finally avenged on the very spot where it was committed.

Malachy II., who had been king of Ireland for eighteen years, hearing of Brian's victorious pro-

defile they found it blocked by the allied armies of Brian and Malachy. They then, it seems, hastily made preparations for an attack; but the Irish were too quick for them, and in the terrible battle which ensued the Danes were totally defeated, with a loss of several thousand killed, including their Prince, Harold, the Heir Apparent to their sovereignty in Ireland. Mailmora, king of Leinster, escaped by concealing himself in a yew tree, where he was discovered and taken prisoner by Murrough, Brian's son. Brian pursued the fugitives the whole way to Dublin, which he entered, plundering and burning their fortress there.

The place where this great battle was fought is recorded with minute details as being in the

neighbourhood of Dunlavin, though the name of "Glenmama" has long since been forgotten ; and even the very spots where the dead were buried in promiscuous heaps could be pointed out till recently by some of the old inhabitants.

The ancient fortress of Dunlavin, the palace of the Kings of Leinster, stood one mile due south of the modern town of Dunlavin, and higher up the hillside which forms the southern slope of the valley of Glenmama. The remains are now generally known as the Moat of Tournant. From this the valley runs generally in a north-easterly direction and terminates about two miles from Dunlavin.

After the first rout the Danes retreated back along the defile and across the low hills which intervene between it and the ford of Lemons-town, on a tributary of the Liffey, where they attempted to rally, but only to be killed in thousands. Their bones are to this day turned up in the fields near this ford, and several sepulchral mounds along the banks of the stream are full of them. Another body of the fugitives fled to Hollywood, about a mile and a half eastward of the ford, and on to the Horsepass on the Liffey, where they made a last but futile stand against the victorious Irish. A reference to a map of the locality will make these details much more intelligible.

Travellers from Dublin by the Blessington and Baltinglass road, on approaching Poulaphuca, may have noticed up the river, to the left, the shattered

and crumbling arches of a venerable-looking bridge. This is Horsepass Bridge, which superseded the ancient ford, and was in its turn superseded by the modern bridge of Poulaphuca. At this place, as the name would indicate, was in former times a deep and dangerous ford, which, except when the river was very low, could only be passed on horseback. The old road from Dublin crossed the Liffey here, and it can still be plainly traced for some distance at each side of the ruined bridge. The Danish army must have forded the river here on their march from Dublin, and the survivors, in attempting to recross it on their retreat, were killed or drowned in great numbers.

Towards the close of the last century, when some of the wild swamps and moors around Dunlavin were being reclaimed, the workmen came upon the pits where the slain were buried in heaps, but closed them up again on seeing what they were. About twenty years ago, when some further excavations were being made here, one of these pits was again opened, and was found to contain a great quantity of human bones, among which was a Danish sword.

To the eastward of Glenmama is the old churchyard of Crehelp, now almost indistinguishable and unknown. Within it conspicuously stands a granite pillar or shaft, about five feet high. Dim tradition avers that beneath this rude memorial, in a warrior's gory grave, sleeps the fierce Harold, son of Amlaff, Prince Royal of the Norsemen of Erin.

## II.—THE BATTLE OF CLONTARF.



**B**RIAN BORU having defeated the Danes and the Leinster Irish at Glenmama, adopted a policy of conciliation towards them, in pursuance of which he gave his daughter in marriage to Sitric, King of the Dublin Danes, and himself married Gormflaith, mother of Sitric, and sister of Mailmora, King of Leinster. This Gormflaith was a woman of celebrated beauty but questionable antecedents, as she had been previously married to and repudiated in turn by Amlaff, the Dane, and King Malachy II. She appears to have been of a deep and vengeful disposition, and continually hatching mischief. Having formed this confederacy with his vanquished foes, Brian returned to his palace at Kincora, near Killalee, whither he was accompanied by Gormflaith. Here he held his court, and received the homage of many princes and chiefs. But the great victory of Glenmama seems to have awakened in his mind the ambition to make himself ruler of all Ireland, and accordingly, with this object, he organised a conspiracy in violation of his treaty with Malachy to depose him from the throne. After some trifling engagements between them, Malachy reluctantly gave his informal consent to an arrangement by which he became a vassal of Brian's with the nominal title of King of Meath, and then Brian became sole King of Ireland.

Meanwhile Gormflaith was plotting as usual, and this time against Brian, her husband. Mailmora one day arrived at Kincora, bringing as a present to Brian three pine masts which had been cut in the forest of Figile near Clonsast, five miles north-east of Portarlinton. In conveying the trees from that place Mailmora personally assisted in lifting one of them for a few moments. He wore a tunic of silk with silver buttons, a present from Brian, and in the exertion one of the buttons got torn off, which, on his arrival at Kincora, he asked his sister, Gormflaith, to replace. She took the tunic, but, to his surprise, threw it into the fire, reproaching him bitterly

for his meanness in submitting as vassal to any man, adding that his father or grandfather would never have been guilty of such.

This incident greatly excited Mailmora, and before long another incident occurred which precipitated the inevitable result. Brian's son, Murrogh, was playing a game of chess with his cousin, when Mailmora, looking on, suggested a move by which Murrogh lost the game. Murrogh, annoyed at this, said, "That was like the advice you gave the Danes, which lost them the battle of Glenmama," to which Mailmora replied, "I will give them advice again, and they shall not be defeated." Murrogh answered bitterly, "Then you had better remind them to prepare a yew tree for your reception," alluding to his having taken refuge in a yew tree after Glenmama. Mailmora was so much exasperated by this reply that he left Kincora abruptly next morning, and set out for Leinster, vowing vengeance against Brian and his allies. On his arrival he lost no time in rousing his tribe to revolt, in which they were soon joined by the Dublin Danes.

In 1013 they made an expedition into Malachy's kingdom, ravaging it, murdering the inhabitants, and plundering the churches, whereupon Malachy sent messengers to Brian to demand the protection to which he was entitled as a vassal. Brian collected his Dalcassian troops, with their allies, and marched into Leinster, ravaging the hostile districts with fire and sword. His son, Murrogh, in command of an auxiliary force, preceded by a different route and devastated the whole district from Glendalough to Kilmainham. As the country lying directly between these two places is even now little more than a desert, it may be safely presumed that his line of march lay along the coast. The two armies, under King Brian and his son, met at Dublin, the walls of which they surrounded, forming a blockade. There they remained from 9th September till Christmas without a move being made by either party, the Irish resting in their camp and the Danes keeping close within their walls. Then, as events began to prove, it

was the besiegers who were really blockaded, for their provisions became exhausted long before those of the besieged, and so Brian was obliged, much to his disappointment, to raise the siege and return to his headquarters in Munster.

But the Danes well knew that he was not a man to be easily diverted from his purpose, and accordingly news soon began to reach them of preparations for a second and greater expedition. Thoroughly alarmed, for they had not forgotten Glenmama, and greatly distrusting their own strength to cope with him, they sent ambassadors to their various allies abroad, to raise the standard of war and invoke assistance for a final contest with this formidable foe. All Scandinavian Europe now bustled with preparations for the coming struggle, and every armoury in Norway, Sweden, and Denmark resounded with din and clangour. In the following spring detachments began to arrive, and fleet after fleet poured into Dublin mighty cohorts of mailed and armed warriors in corselets of gleaming brass or glittering steel. And there came nobles and chieftains of mighty renown from Saxon-land, from the far isles of Orkney, and from the bleak Northern coasts. But Brian unawed by these preparations, strove night and day to perfect his plans to crush "the proud invader." He again marched into Leinster, burning Howth and Fingall. And when the Danes from the battlements of Dublin saw afar the blaze and glow from the plains of Fingall, they knew that he was on the march, and they sallied forth to attack him on the "Plain of the Bird Flocks," which extended from Tallaght to Howth. Brian was now encamped on the Green of Dublin, probably at the northern side of the Liffey. On the eve of Holy Thursday, hearing that the Danes were determined to fight next day, he held a council of war with his nobles, and, after lengthened deliberations, it was decided to prepare for battle, though they were very unwilling to fight on a day hallowed by such sacred associations. When Good Friday, 23rd April, 1014, dawned the two armies stood face to face, deployed in battle line, waiting for the signal to begin, the Danish fleet lay moored along the northern side of the bay, and a small portion of their army garrisoned the fortress of Dublin.

The weight of evidence would seem to indicate that the battle was mainly fought south of the Tolka, instead of north of it, as has been generally assumed; in other words, that the battlefield was not Clontarf, but the ground now covered by the north side of the city.

In proof of this it is recorded that the progress of the battle was anxiously watched from the battlements of Dublin by Sitric and the Danish garrison, who, it is stated, could distinguish friends from foes. These battlements must have been somewhere on the hill at present occupied by the Castle. Now, assuming that all north of the Liffey was then open country, and without taking into account the inequalities and undulations of the ground, it may be safely asserted that the range of distinct vision could not extend beyond the Tolka, two miles distant.

The fact that the battle is now known as "The Battle of Clontarf" does not afford much clue to the site, for in the contemporary Scandinavian records it is called "Brian's Battle" and in the Irish records, "the Battle of the Fishing-weir of Clontarf," and there is good reason to believe that this weir stood not at Ballybough-bridge, as has been supposed, but higher up the Tolka, near Clonliffe, which was more likely the mouth at that time.

In 1763, when opening some new ground at Cavendish-row and Granby-row, a great quantity of human bones, accompanied by the remains of arms and armour, were discovered in trenches—relics, no doubt, of this great battle.

The Irish account of the battle (*Wars of the Gaedhil with the Gaill*) states that a few days before the engagement, part of the Danish army sailed in their fleet to Howth, probably to attack the Irish there, but, returning, effected a junction with the main body of the Danes and the Leinster Irish under Mailmora, upon which the battle commenced immediately.

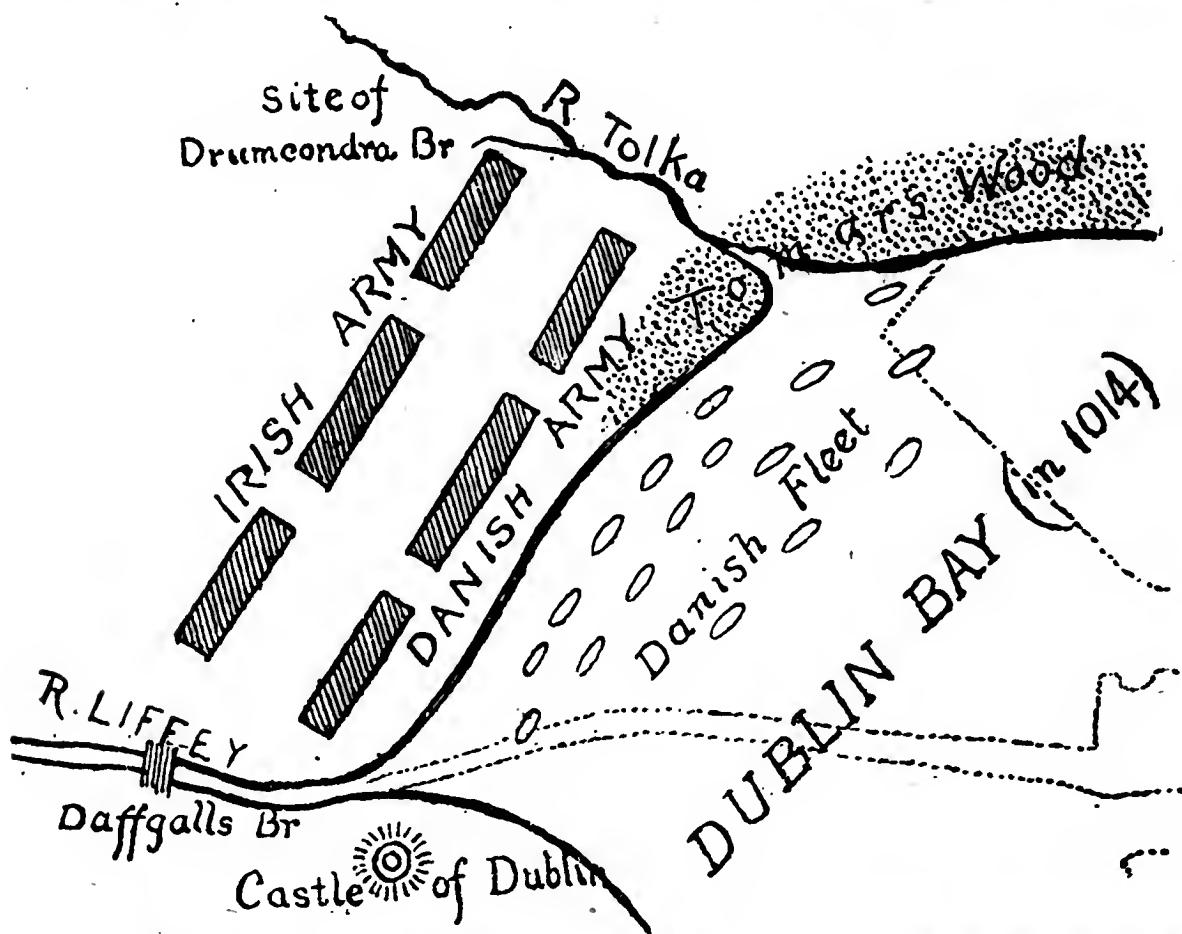
From the foregoing facts, it may be reasonably concluded (1), that during the combat the Danish fleet was moored along the coast immediately north of the Liffey, and that the Danish army formed on the shore with their backs to the sea; (2), that King Brian having chosen his ground so that the

Liffey interposed between the battlefield and the fortress of Dublin, the Danes were forced to abandon Dublin as a base of refuge and to depend solely on their fleet in case of retreat, and (3) that the bulk of the fighting took place, as I have stated, between the Tolka and the Liffey.

The waters of Dublin Bay then flowed very much farther inland than now, and the seashore extended from about Grattan Bridge by Abbey street, O'Connell (or Sackville street), and thence somewhat eastward of Mountjoy square out to the Tolka between Ballybough and Drumcondra.

sonally engage in it, rode along in front of his army, and holding aloft the cross, the emblem of their proscribed and persecuted religion, reminded them of the great sacrifice of that day, and exhorted them to fight valiantly for their faith and fatherland. They then advanced to the combat, the details of which are given in extravagant and bombastic language by the old historians.

The battle raged from early morning till about four o'clock in the evening, when, nearly all the Danish leaders of note having fallen, the Irish



The position then of the two armies in action would lie, roughly speaking, in a line from the Four Courts to Drumcondra. Of course Dublin was then only a small town south of the Liffey, of which the (Danish) Castle was the centre or citadel.

Just before the battle commenced, King Brian, who on account of his great age did not per-

appear to have made a concentrated attack upon their centre, whereupon the Danes having no one to rally them fell back in disorder. The confusion now became general, and they fled on every side; one portion attempted to reach their comrades in Dublin by crossing the Liffey at Duffgall's Bridge, supposed to have been near the present Queen's-street Bridge, but the Irish had

anticipated them there, and, cutting off their retreat, not a man escaped. Another large body fled back to the strand to regain their ships, but when they reached the shore they found that it was high water, and they were thus cut off from all refuge in that quarter. In despair many threw themselves into the sea, and endeavouring to swim out to the ships were drowned in great numbers. A wood called Tomar's Wood then fringed the northern shores of Dublin Bay, and in this wood some of the Irish took up a position, killing many of the fugitives who came that way.

The Danes, now hemmed in between the Tolka on the north and the Liffey on the south, with the Irish on their west side and the sea on the east, made a desperate rush to force a passage across the Tolka, then swollen by the returning tide; here the greatest slaughter took place, the river bed being in places choked up with the bodies. A considerable number, however, succeeded in escaping across it and over to the northern shore of the bay, and, being pursued, a running fight was kept up along the Strand from Clontarf out to Howth. The recollection of this may have originated the local tradition that the battle was fought at Clontarf, though probably very little of the actual fighting took place there. It is likely, however, that the district of Clontarf was then more extensive, and reached inland as far as Drumcondra and southward as far as the Tolka. Another tradition states that a party of Danes who were pursued out to Howth took refuge on the Bailey promontory, on which a ruined fortress stood, and there defended themselves against desperate odds till their ships took them off in safety.

The battle was all open fighting, the nature of the ground admitting of no ambuscades and little strategy. The combatants fought man to man and breast to breast, and the victory was gained by dint of sheer physical strength and personal valour. No mention is made of any cavalry having been used in the engagement, though there are evidences of the existence of Danish cavalry in Ireland before this period.

Towards the close of the conflict, when King Brian was praying in his tent, his attendant

noticed a small party of Danes approaching, and directed his attention to them. They were about to pass him by, when one of them recognised him as the Irish King. Thereupon Bredar, the commander of the fleet, who was one of the party, raised his gleaming battle-axe and attacked him. Brian drew his sword, and with one furious blow cut off his leg at the knee, but the fierce Viking before falling had time to cleave the King's head with his axe. So fell the mighty Brian Boru, the one Irish sovereign who rose superior to the petty jealousies and tribal disputes of his time, and united his country in a supreme and successful effort to free it from the Danes, who at that time and for long afterwards held undisputed sovereignty in England.

Brian's son Murrogh also fell in the battle. He engaged in combat a Danish chieftain, but his hand was so disabled that he had to drop his sword; he then seized his adversary by the helmet with his left hand, and tearing off his armour threw him to the ground. Murrogh then being uppermost, seized the foreigner's sword and stabbed him thrice with it, but notwithstanding this the dying chieftain drew his long knife and gave Murrogh a deadly wound of which he expired next morning. Brian's grandson Turlough, only 15 years of age, the son of Murrogh, was found drowned at the fishing-weir after the battle with his hands entangled in the long hair of a Dane whom he had pursued into the river.

Among others that fell in the battle were the traitor Mailmora and Brian's nephew who played the celebrated game of chess at Kincora. They fell in combat with each other.

Thus at a blow the reigning family became extinct, and there can be little doubt that the dynastic wars which followed, bringing Ireland to the verge of social and national dissolution, ultimately paved the way for the invasion of Strongbow and the Anglo-Normans.

Among the incidents of the battle it is recorded that in the earlier part of the day, while the issue was yet doubtful, Sitric, who was on the battlements of his watch tower in Dublin, said, "Well do the foreigners reap the field; many is the sheaf they cut down," to which his wife (Brian's daughter) replied, "That will be seen at the end of

the day." But when it was evening, and the Danes were in full retreat towards the sea, she said to him, in bitter irony, "The foreigners are going into the sea, their natural inheritance. I wonder is it to cool themselves!" Whereupon he became so angered that he struck her a blow in the mouth which knocked out one of her teeth!

Sitric was the son of Amlaff, and brether of Harold who fell at Glumama, so that it may be naturally supposed that he felt great enmity towards the Irish. His marriage with King Brian's daughter, which took place soon after Glumama, was a diplomatic alliance for which Brian himself was mainly responsible.

There is curious corroborative evidence to show that the writer of the Irish account of the battle must have been an eye-witness or got his details from one who was. It is stated that on the day of the battle (23rd April, 1014) full tide coincided with sunrise, and that the full tide again in the evening cut off the Danes from their ships. This has since been proved to be true by Dr Haughton, T C D, who, without a knowledge of the Irish account of the battle, by a difficult and abstruse calculation found that on that particular day it was high water at 5 30 o'clock in the morning and again at 5 55 o'clock in the evening.

## THE CAREER AND BATTLES OF THE BRUCES.



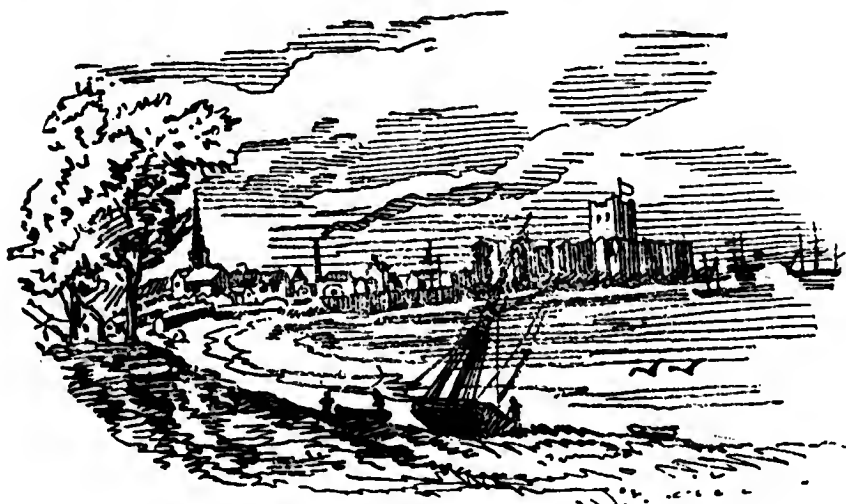
**F**ROM the time of the Anglo-Norman invasions the history of Ireland is occupied by a tedious succession of aimless civil wars without any battles of note till the era of the Bruces in 1315.

The Battle of Bannockburn placed Robert Bruce on the throne of Scotland, but in the wars with the English, his brother Edward had shown such vigour and ability that it became desirable to find some fitting position for him. Ireland seemed to offer a likely field, and accordingly, an arrangement having been concluded with some of the

Irish chieftains, on 25th May, 1315, Edward Bruce landed near Carrickfergus with an army of 6,000 men and a number of Scottish officers of distinction. They then sent home their ships determined, like the Dedannans of old, to leave no means of retreat. The colonists of eastern Ulster, under the great De Burgh, known as the Red Earl, encountered Bruce shortly after landing, but were utterly defeated by him at a place called Connor, near Ballymena, upon which a party of them retreated to Carrickfergus and shut themselves up in the strong castle there. Bruce now marched on and took possession of Carrickfergus, at that time an important town and especially valuable to him on account of its proximity to Scotland. Its great castle, however held out, and as he had no adequate means of attacking it, he left a portion of his army there to maintain a blockade. He was by this time sorely in want of provisions, and, marching southwards, he drew up his army in array before Dundalk, which was garrisoned by a powerful English force. A reconnoitring party sent out from the town returned with the cheering news that the Scots would be but "half a dinner to them." But the Scotch attack was so vigorous that the place was captured in one assault, and Bruce's army triumphantly entered the town, where they found abundance of stores and provisions.

After this great victory Bruce was crowned King of Ireland on the Hill of Knocknamelin, near Dundalk. Hearing now that the Viceroy was on the march against him with an army of 20,000 men, he left Dundalk, and, moving westward, reached a great forest which then lay south of Lough Ross in Monaghan. Here he remained in concealment for a month with his army, awaiting the coming of various Irish chieftains who had promised him assistance. While sheltering in this forest his scouts saw a large army moving past in command of the Red Earl. Bruce, however, did not show himself, as his army was greatly inferior in numbers, but retreated slowly northwards

Neil Fleming, a brave old warrior who had won his spurs on many a bloody field. He, seeing how matters stood, resolved to sacrifice himself and his party in engaging the assailants, so as to give the Scots time to get ready. Having sent a messenger to Bruce he rushed forward, sword in hand, shouting, "Now they shall see how we can die for our king." He received a mortal wound in the combat, and nearly all his men were killed, but his heroic conduct checked the onset of the English. Mandeville, temporarily victorious, now marched in triumph through the streets of Carrickfergus till he was met by Bruce and his men. Gilbert Harper, a renowned Scottish officer of gigantic stature and strength, recognising



CARRICKFERGUS AND CASTLE.

and renewed the siege of Carrickfergus Castle. After about two months, the garrison showing no signs of surrender, he was again obliged in December to suspend active operations till the following spring on account of the severity of the weather.

On 10th April, 1316, Lord Thomas Mandeville, in command of a strong body of troops, marched to the assistance of the Castle, and succeeded in obtaining an entrance after a struggle with the besiegers. Early next morning at daybreak he made a sudden and desperate sortie on the Scots, who were lying in camp utterly unprepared for the attack. They had only sixty men on guard, commanded by one

Mandeville by the richness of his armour, singled him out, and felled him to the ground with a blow of his battle-axe, where he was immediately despatched by Bruce with a dagger. The English, disheartened by the death of their leader, turned and fled back to the Castle, whither they were so closely pursued by the Scots that the garrison had to raise the drawbridge and abandon their comrades to the mercy of their ruthless enemies.

Bruce now closely invested the Castle, knowing that their provisions were nearly exhausted, and about this time his brother Robert arrived from Scotland with reinforcements, and assisted in the siege.

The garrison, now seeing their hopeless plight,

offered to surrender on 31st May, unless relieved in the meantime. This was agreed to by the Scots, and, when that time arrived, Bruce sent 30 of his men to the Castle to demand surrender. They were admitted, but immediately made prisoners by the garrison, who then raised the drawbridge and announced their intention to hold out to the last. Bruce accordingly kept up the blockade, and by the end of August the besieged were reduced to such desperate straits for provisions that they ate their shoes, boots, and horses, and ended, as the annalists (*Cox, Stanyhurst*, etc) gravely inform us, by eating the 30 Scottish prisoners, after which they were good enough to surrender unconditionally.

Having left a strong garrison in the Castle, Bruce now proceeded southwards, and took up his quarters at Lough Sewdy, now Lough Sunderlin, at Ballymore, in Westmeath; thence he marched into the heart of the Pale by Rathangan, Kildare, Athy, and Naas, where he was joined by a number of the wild clans from the fastnesses of the Wicklow mountains.

Meanwhile Felim O'Connor, a powerful Connaught chieftain, who had been fighting on the side of the English, seceded from his alliance with De Burgh, and openly declared for Bruce. Having secured the assistance of the chief tribes of the West he mustered an immense army in Connaught and marched on Athenry, then the fortified stronghold of the De Burghs and De Berminghams. On 10th Aug, 1317, was fought the battle of Athenry, said to have been one of the most bloody and decisive ever fought on Irish soil. It was contested with heroic obstinacy, but the armour-clad Norman hosts under William De Burgh and Richard De Bermingham ultimately prevailed over the linen coated clansmen of the West. 10,000 of whom were left dead upon the field. The trained English archers contributed largely to the issue of this battle, the Irish being no more able to stand against them than the French were in after years at Crecy and Poitiers. It was a sad and disastrous day for the Irish arms, and almost extinguished the hopes of the Bruces in the South. A great number of the Irish nobility fell, and tradition states that, like the Fabian family of old, the once powerful sept of the

O'Conors were all but exterminated, Felim's brother alone surviving. De Bermingham after this was made Baron of Athenry.

The English, emboldened by this success, now adopted more vigorous measures. The Mayor of Dublin, in command of a band of citizens, went to Mary's Abbey, then outside the city, and after a conflict, arrested the Red Earl on a charge of complicity with Bruce, to whom he was closely related by marriage. The Bruces were now marching on Dublin, and took Castleknock, where they encamped. That night the citizens of Dublin, frantic with terror, burnt the western suburbs of the city, and adopted such other defensive measures as deterred the Scots from attacking the place. The Bruces, now foiled, marched along the green banks of the Liffey till they reached the pleasantly-situated waterfall at Leixlip (Salmon Leap), where they rested for four days. They now commenced a career of plunder and destruction, and passing on to Naas reduced the ancient town to ashes. They next plundered Castledermot Friary, and marched on to Kilkenny, devastating and burning the whole country through which they passed. Their course could be tracked by the fire and smoke of burning towns and houses, and the unfortunate inhabitants were reduced to such distress that great numbers died by starvation.

The closing act in the career of this unhappy prince was now fast approaching. Robert had returned to Scotland to look after his own kingdom, and Edward, apprehensive of an attack from Mortimer (Earl of March) again retired northwards. John De Bermingham had assembled an immense army in the Pale, whence he was advancing on Dundalk, where Bruce was encamped. Notwithstanding the great numerical inferiority of his army, Bruce resolved to risk the issue of battle, contrary to the advice of all his officers, who wished him to wait for reinforcements hourly expected from Scotland.

It is stated that before the battle the English commander De Bermingham, who was anxious to see Bruce so as to identify him afterward, disguised himself as a mendicant friar and obtained admission into the Scottish camp, where Mass was being celebrated. He made his way to Bruce,

who was on his knees praying, and never ceased asking him for alms till the King looked up from his missal and ordered his attendants to give something to the troublesome mendicant. But Bruce discovered the identity of this strange visitor after his departure, and at once divining the object of the visit, he changed clothes with Gilbert Harper.

On Sunday, 14th October, 1318, the two armies met on the grassy slopes of the Hill of Faughart, near Dundalk. Sir John De Bermingham commanded the English

one John Mapas, who struck him down with a leaden plummet or slung-shot, and after the battle his body was found lying across that of Bruce. It is said by some that Mapas had previously made himself acquainted with the King's appearance, and, knowing that the fortunes of the day depended on it, determined to kill him in battle, even at the cost of his own life.

Faughart Hill is situated about two miles from Dundalk, and on its summit are the ruins of St Brigid's church and churchyard, about a quarter



FAUGHART HILL AND RUINS.

and Lord Alan Stewart the Scotch. Bruce, anxious to personally secure the credit of the expected victory, prematurely ordered a charge, which was repulsed with considerable loss. The English then made a rapid charge upon the Scots, portion of whom stood firm, but were quickly hewn down; the remainder fled back to the Irish contingent. De Bermingham, notwithstanding his having seen Bruce, mistook Stewart for him, and slew him in single combat, on which the Scots fled in disorder. Bruce was, however, subsequently recognised by

of a mile to the left of the old road from Dundalk to Newry. The churchyard is still used as a burial-ground. About four yards from the western corner, in a neglected grave, lie the mutilated remains of the unfortunate and chivalrous Edward Bruce. His head was sent to England, a ghastly present for the King. At the western end of his grave is an uninscribed, or at least illegible, tombstone, nearly horizontal, of which but little now remains above the soil. The hallow space known as Carrickbroad, between Faughart Hill and the Moiry Pass, is still pointed out as

the spot where Bruce, having gone out from his camp unguarded, was killed by Mapas.

Taking a brief retrospective view of Bruce's career, it is difficult to see how it could have ended otherwise, and, except for the number of Irishmen who fell in his cause, it is hard to regret his discomfiture. Though chivalrous and brave, his hasty and impetuous disposition pre-eminently unfitted him for a position of authority, and his horrible sacrileges, wanton cruelties, and inexplicable spirit of destruction alienated the sympathies of those he undertook to emancipate. He possessed but few of

those great qualities which made his illustrious brother the victor of Bannockburn.

It is a remarkable fact that Faughart Hill was the scene of another great battle in far earlier times—732 A.D.—between Hugh Allan, King of Ireland, and Hugh Roin, King of Ulidia, or Eastern Ulster. The King of Ulidia was defeated, and beheaded on a stone called in Irish "The Stone of Decapitation," which is still pointed out by tradition in the doorway of St Brigid's church on the summit of the hill. The cause of this battle was the profanation of Kilcooney church, in county Tyrone, by King Roin.

## THE WARS OF HUGH O'NEILL.

### I.—THE FORD OF THE BISCUITS.



**W**HILE Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone, was wavering in his allegiance to the English, but had not yet openly declared for the Irish, a great part of the North was in rebellion. In 1594 the Lord Deputy of Ireland marched from Dublin with a large force and besieged Enniskillen, capturing the castle there, and having placed a strong garrison in it he returned to Dublin. When Hugh Maguire, one of the rebel chieftains, heard of the Deputy's departure he despatched messengers to Red Hugh O'Donnell requesting his assistance to besiege and re-capture the town. Young O'Donnell, who had only just escaped from his prison in Dublin Castle, gladly responded to this demand, and, marching to his assistance, they both laid siege to the castle from the beginning of June till the middle of August, when O'Donnell left to meet some Scottish allies who had just landed in the North. The garrison contrived to send word to Dublin that they were reduced to great ex-

tremities for want of provisions, on which the Deputy ordered two expeditions, from Leinster and Connaught respectively, to march to Cavan, then an English stronghold, where they were to unite and obtain supplies, and thence to proceed by forced marches to the relief of Enniskillen.

The town of Enniskillen is situated on an island in the centre of a deep and winding strait connecting upper and lower Lough Erne, embayed on all sides by mountains, to the left of which lay the English line of march. Maguire having heard of this expedition and its object, relinquished the blockade of the castle, and setting out with his own forces and some of O'Donnell's, took up his position at a ford on the river Arney, now spanned by Drumane Bridge, about five miles south of Enniskillen, across which he knew the English must pass. In a few days the expedition arrived and halted near the ford, where they were unexpectedly assailed after night-fall by a heavy fire from the Irish, which was maintained at intervals throughout the night. Next morning the English advanced on the ford in three lines, between which were the baggage and provisions, the flanks being supported by cavalry and musketeers.

As they approached the river they were fiercely attacked by the Irish musketeers and pikemen, but they fought stubbornly on, cut their way through the Irish, and crossed the ford. But now

this body of the Irish, cut in two and driven to the sides, attacked and forced the English flanks in upon their centre, and, pouring in a destructive fire, threw them into confusion, on which they were charged in front by the Irish pikemen, which increased the disorder. The three lines became hopelessly entangled in the baggage between them, and becoming commingled, the whole force was broken up, and fled back across the ford in tumultuous confusion, leaving all their provisions and baggage along the river banks. A great slaughter was made, and many steeds, weapons, and other

valuable spoils were left behind by the English, besides the convoys of provisions which were intended for the victualling of the fortress of Enniskillen.

When the garrison of Enniskillen Castle heard of the defeat of the relieving force, they surrendered on condition of their lives being spared, which was agreed to by Maguire, and they accordingly departed in safety. On account of the quantity of provisions left behind by the English, Maguire called this ford Ballinabriska, or "The Ford of the Biscuits."

## II.—CLONTIBRET.

In 1595 both Armagh and Monaghan, held by English garrisons, were closely invested by the Irish under Hugh O'Neill, who had now thrown off all disguise and was in open war with the Government. General Norris, who was commanded by the Deputy to march to the relief of the beleaguered garrisons, attempted to victual Armagh, but was repulsed after a severe struggle, in which he was wounded. Soon afterwards, however, he succeeded in throwing provisions into Monaghan over the walls of a monastery in which the English had fortified themselves. O'Neill hearing of this, resolved to intercept Norris on his return march, and choosing his ground at Clontibret, a small village six miles south-east of Monaghan, he drew up his troops in battle array on the left bank of a small stream which runs northward through a valley enclosed by low hills. Here he awaited the approach of the English.

When Norris arrived he attempted to force a passage, but was driven back. Again and again he tried, but was as often beaten back, each time he himself bravely charging at the head of his men, and being the last to retire. Both he and his brother, Sir Thomas Norris, were now wounded, and the day seemed apparently won

by the Irish, when a body of English cavalry, led by a gigantic Meathian officer named Seagrave, dashed across the stream and fiercely charged the Irish horsemen led by O'Neill in person. Seagrave singled out O'Neill, and rushing to meet him, these two doughty warriors shivered their lances on each other's corselets. The single combat became so exciting that the opposing troops on either side, as by common accord, grounded arms and awaited the result in silence. Seagrave now attempted to drag O'Neill from his horse by main force, and O'Neill grappling with his gigantic adversary the two rolled on the ground together in deadly struggle. The Irish chieftain, though the smaller, was much the more active of the two, and drawing his sword he buried it deep in Seagrave's body, beneath his armour. Bounding up victorious, O'Neill now quickly remounted his horse, and leading his cavalry to the charge, swept like a whirlwind down upon the English, who turned and fled headlong across the stream, leaving their standard and 700 dead behind them. Norris hastily retreated to Newry, whence a detachment of the English, who had learned of the disaster, came to meet him, and in a few days Monaghan was surrendered to the victorious Irish arms.

## III.—ARMAGH.

In 1596 Armagh was still held by the English. The garrison was strong, and was protected by an army under Norris, which lay

encamped at Killoter, in the neighbourhood. The town being an important one, O'Neill was anxious to expel the English from it; but not having the

materials for a siege, he attacked Norris and drove him from his encampment till he took refuge in the town. Here Norris left 500 men to reinforce the garrison, retiring with the remainder of his army to Dundalk. O'Neill did not seek to molest him, but when he was gone, sat down before Armagh and intercepted all the supplies for the garrison, so that famine ensued. The English in Dundalk hearing of the sore distress of their comrades, sent a convoy of provisions to their relief under escort of three companies of infantry and a troop of horse. O'Neill, tired of the monotony of the blockade, now bethought him of a stratagem by which he might capture the town at once. Hearing of the

and firing, rushed to their battlements, from which they saw what appeared to be a detachment of their countrymen in full march to relieve them with provisions; then they saw the Irish make an onslaught on them, and a furious battle seemed to proceed. Both parties kept up a tremendous fire with their muskets loaded with powder only, and the quasi-combatants fell on every side according to instructions. After a while the English seemed to be over-matched; the Irish were pressing fiercely upon them, pouring in a terrible fire, brandishing their battle-axes, and shouting ferociously the while. This was more than the hungry garrison could bear. Stafford, the commander, gave orders that half of



ARMAGH.

approach of the convoy, he made preparations to meet it on the way, and succeeded in capturing it, and making prisoners of the escort. He now ordered a number of his men to strip the English prisoners of their uniforms and attire themselves in them, and at daybreak marched them towards Armagh with English colours flying, as if coming to the relief of the place. The previous night he had stationed an ambuscade in a ruined monastery a little to the south-east of the town. O'Neill now pursued the supposed English up to near the ruin, upon which commenced a fierce sham battle between them, the party in the ruin remaining hidden all the time.

The garrison of Armagh, aroused by the tumult

them should take up arms and advance rapidly to the relief of their countrymen on the battlefield.

When they arrived they found to their amazement that both English and Irish united in attacking them—nay, even the dead and wounded on the battlefield marvellously revived and assisted in the attack. So dumbfounded were they by these extraordinary proceedings that they had scarcely the strength to defend themselves. After a brief though gallant struggle they were worsted and attempted to return to Armagh. But now the party in the monastery, sallying forth from their ambuscade, cut off their retreat, and thus, surrounded on all sides, they were speedily killed or taken prisoners. Stafford, who commanded

the remainder of the garrison in Armagh, seeing the futility of further resistance, surrendered to O'Neill, and was permitted by him to retire with the survivors to Dundalk. The Irish then entered Armagh in triumph; but O'Neill, who preferred offensive to defensive measures, and was unwilling to garrison it, dismantled the fortifications and evacuated the town.

Soon afterwards the English, under the Deputy, again entering the town, restored the fortifications and held them till the Battle of the Yellow Ford.

The monastery in which the ambushade was stationed, though a very extensive ruin in the 16th century, has since been gradually dilapidated and removed for building purposes, and but little of it now remains.

#### THE TAKING OF ARMAGH, 1596.

'Twas fast by grey Killoter we made the Saxons run;  
We hewed them with the claymore and smote them  
with the gun.

"Armagh! Armagh!" cried Norris, as wild he spurred  
away,  
And sore beset and scattered they reached its walls  
that day.

Alas, we had no cannon to batter down the gate,  
To level fosse and rampart; so we were forced to wait,  
And 'leaguer late and early that place of old renown,  
By dint of plague and famine to bring the foeman down.

We camped amid the valleys and bonnie woods about,  
But spite of all our watching one gallant wight got out,  
Till far Dundalk he entered, by spurring day and night,  
And told them of our 'leaguer, and all their woful plight.

'Twas on a stormy twilight, when wildly roared the blast,  
Up to our prince's standard a scout came spurring fast,  
And told him how that convoy—four hundred stalwart  
men—

Had pitched their camp at sunset by Gartan's woody  
glen.

We swept upon their vanguard, we rushed on rear and  
flank;  
Like corn before the sickle, we mowed them rank on  
rank,  
And ere the ghostly midnight we'd slain them every one—  
I trow they slept far sounder before the morrow's dawn,

"Now don the convoy's garments, and take their stan-  
dard, too—"

'Twas thus at break of morn'ing out spake our gallant  
Hugh;

"And march ye toward the city, with baggage, arms,  
and all,  
With all their promised succour, and see what shall  
befall."

We donned their blood-red garments, and shook their  
banner free,

We marched us towards the city, a gallant sight to see;  
Upon their drums we rattled the Saxon point of war,  
And soon the foemen heard us, and answered from afar.

With all his rushing troopers, out from the wood he  
sped,

Their matchlocks filled with powder—they did not want  
the lead—

And well they feigned the onset, with shot and sabre  
stroke,

And deftly, too, we met them with clouds of harmless  
smoke.

Some tossed them from their saddles, to imitate the  
slain;

Whole ranks fell at each volley, along the bloodless  
plain;

And groans and hollow murmurs of well-feigned woe  
and fear

From that strange fight rang mournfully upon the foe-  
man's ear.

Up heaved the huge portcullis, round swang the pon-  
derous gate,

Out rushed the foe to rescue or share their comrades'  
fate;

And fiercely waved their banners, and bright their lances  
shone,

And "George for Merrie England!" they cried as they  
fell on.

Saint Columb! the storm of laughter that from our ranks  
arose,

As up the corpses started and fell upon our foes;

As we, the routed convoy, closed up our thick ranks  
well,

And met the foe with claymore, red pike, and petronel!

Yet stout retired the Saxon, though he was sore dis-  
trait,

Till, with his ranks commingled, in burst we through  
the gate;

Then soon the Red Hand fluttered upon their highest  
towers,

And wild we raised our triumph shout, for old Armagh  
was ours!"

ROBERT DWYER JOYCE.

## IV.—TYRRELLSPASS AND DRUMFLUICH.



IN 1597, after the capture of Armagh, Red Hugh O'Donnell and a number of Irish chieftains entered Connaught with their troops, ravaging and burning the hostile towns. In Leinster, the great Wicklow chief, Feagh MacHugh O'Byrne, was betrayed into the hands of the English by some of his kinsmen, and killed in the wilds of Balinacor, near Rathdrum. Lord Thomas Borough was appointed Deputy this year, and one of his first acts was to deprive Sir Thomas Norris of his command, and send him to govern Munster with his brother. Borough was a much more able and determined man than his predecessor Russell, and had orders to prosecute the war vigorously against the Irish.

After some fruitless attempts at a conference between the belligerents, a truce of one month was agreed to, though the object in view by both parties was to rest and collect their forces. The month having expired, the Deputy set out for Ulster in command of a powerful army, and directed his course towards Armagh, while Sir Conyers Clifford, governor of Connaught, simultaneously advanced with his troops to Boyle, and thence marching by the western shores of Lough Erne he was to effect a junction with the Deputy in the North.

The Anglo-Irish of Meath, being anxious to distinguish themselves in service against O'Neill, assembled at Mullingar to the number of 1,000 men, also to join the Deputy in the North. They were commanded by young Barnewell, a son of Lord Trimbleston. O'Neill, in Ulster, hearing of all these preparations against him, saw that something should be done at once to create a diversion and check the flow of troops to the North. For this purpose he chose an officer

in his army named Richard Tyrrell, Lord of Fertullagh, in Meath, an Englishman by descent, and one of his own personal friends and ablest commanders. His capabilities for sustaining fatigue and peculiar talents eminently fitted him to command a flying expedition, for there was not a mountain pass, bog, or wood in all the country-side with which he was not thoroughly acquainted. O'Neill accordingly despatched him with 400 light infantry to march by a circuitous route through Leinster and get the assistance of the Wicklow clans. Tyrrell marched through the whole of Meath without meeting an enemy, and now, having reached Fertullagh, his own territory, lying south of Mullingar, he rested a while. While reposing his little army here in the woods around the beautiful Lough Ennel, news reached Mullingar of his whereabouts, on which young Barnewell, confident of success from his superiority of numbers, sallied out to attack him. Tyrrell then retired to Tyrrellspass.

Tyrrellspass is a village prettily situated in a softly rolling country, about twelve miles south of Mullingar. There is no "pass" here in the ordinary signification of the word, but at that time there were impassable bogs at each side of the narrow road, and at the western extremity of the village the castle of the Tyrrells guarded the only road to Athlone. Its crumbling ruins are still to be seen beside the road.

Immediately westward of Tyrrellspass is the small hamlet of Killavally, meaning "the church of the way or pass," so that it is evident that the pass extended from the old castle along by the site of this village.

The name of Tyrrellspass is merely a translation of the original name—"Ballagh-an-treely," meaning "the road or way of the family of Tyrrell," and so called because they owned the castle that commanded the passage of the adjacent road. Most writers unacquainted with the locality, in describing this battle, have consequently fallen into the very natural error of supposing that it was fought in a mountain pass. The "pass," however, must have been then a very

awkward place to be caught in ambuscade, for there was no escape at the sides, one should either advance or retreat.

When Tyrrell, who was some distance north of this, became aware of Barnewell's approach he fell back till he gained the pass, which he made still more dangerous by placing felled trees and other obstructions along the sides of the road. He then at dawn secreted half his little army, under O'wny O'Connor, in some brushwood near the entrance to the "pass," while he himself boldly marched forward as if to meet the enemy. When the English came in sight he appeared to hesitate, then slowly retreated, so as to draw them after him into the pass. They followed impetuously, hoping to annihilate his little band, but the moment they had all defiled past the ambuscade the shrill notes of the pipes from O'Connor's party resounded through the morning air to the tune of "The Tyrrell's March." This being the preconcerted signal, Tyrrell turned about, faced his pursuers, and assailed them in front, while O'wny O'Connor and his men stepped forth from their hiding-place and attacked them in the rear.

The English, entirely hemmed in and unable to deploy, on account of the bogs and obstructions at the sides, fought with the energy of despair, but were completely defeated and annihilated. Young Barnewell was the only prisoner, and of the thousand who had set out from Mullingar but three days before, only one other escaped by plunging up to his neck in a quagmire, where he lay concealed by the reeds and sedge till night. He brought news of the disaster to Mullingar.

O'Connor fought with such fury that day that his hand swelled within the guard of his sword, and had to be released after the battle by the aid of a file.

TYRRELLSPASS, A.D. 1597.

BY ROBERT DWYER JOYCE.

By the flowery banks of Inny the burning sunset fell,  
In many a stream and golden gleam, on hill, and mead,  
and dell,  
And from thy shores, bright Ennel, to the far-off  
mountain crest,  
O'er plain and leafy wildwood there was peace and quiet  
rest.

Oh! sunset is the sweetest of all the hours that be  
For musing lone, or tale of love, by glen or forest tree;  
But its radiance bringeth saddening thoughts to him  
whose good right hand  
Must guard his life in the coming strife 'gainst the foe  
of his fatherland;  
For he knows, when thinking lonely by his small tent  
on the plain,  
The glories of the sinking sun he ne'er may see again.

Brave Tyrrell sat that summer eve amid the forest hills,  
With bold O'Connor at his side, by Inny's fountain  
rills—

Brave Tyrrell of the flying camps, and Owen Oge of  
Cong—  
And round them lay their warriors wild the forest glade  
along.

Four hundred men of proof they were, these warriors  
free and bold;

In many a group they sat around the green skirts of the  
wood;

Some telling of their early loves, and some of mighty  
deeds,

In regions wide by Shannon side, in Galien of the  
steeds—

Some cursing the Invader's steps, and wishing for the  
fray,

That they might see their burning hate ere the close of  
that bright day.

Now up the woody mountain-side the battle rolls  
along;

Now down into the valley's womb the tugging warriors  
throng;

As hounds around a hunted wolf some forest rock be-  
neath,

Whence comes no sound save the mortal rush and the  
gnash of many teeth,

Their charging shouts have died away—no sound rolls  
upward save

The volley of the murderous gun and the crash of axe  
and glaive!

Oh! life, it is a precious gem, yet many there will  
throw

The gem away in the mortal fray for vengeance on the  
foe,

And thus they tug more silent still, till the glen is  
covered wide

With war-steed strong, and sabred corse, and many a  
gory tide.

Hurrah! that shout it rolleth up with cadence wild and  
stern;

'Tis the triumph roar of the gallowglass and the sharp  
yell of the kern!

The foeman flies before their steel—not far, not far he  
flies;

In the gorge's mouth, in the valley's womb, by the  
mountain foot he dies;

Where'er he speeds, death follows him like a shadow in  
his tracks—

He meets the gleam of the fearful pike and the sharp  
and gory axe !  
Their leader of the boasting words, young Trimbleston,  
was ta'en,  
And his champions all, save one weak man, in that bloody  
gorge were slain :  
He sped him on, unchased by kern, unmote by gallow-  
glass,  
That he might tell how his comrades fell that morn in  
Tyrrell's Pass.

Meanwhile Sir Conyers Clifford had marched from Boyle to Sligo, and thence to the Erne, which he crossed after a severe struggle at the Ford of Ath-Cooloen, half a mile west of Belleek. In this engagement he lost one of his principal officers, Murregh O'Brien, Baron of Inchiquin, who was shot when midway across the ford. Clifford having been sent some cannon by sea from Galway, next laid siege to Ballyshannon Castle, which was defended with great obstinacy by the Irish and Spanish garrison. After the cannon had been playing on the castle for three days without any satisfactory result, the English under cover of a testudo made a determined effort to sap the foundations, but the garrison hurled such a tremendous shower of rocks and missiles of every description on them as broke the testudo, and forced them to retire, leaving some dead behind them. Next morning Red Hugh O'Donnell unexpectedly arrived with a large force, and besieged the English in their own camp. Clifford, now overmatched, resolved to retire, and accordingly, in the grey dawn of morning, he silently and stealthily recrossed the Erne at a dangerous ford immediately above the cataract of Assaroe, over which several of his men were washed by the swiftness of the current. O'Donnell, annoyed that they had so easily escaped him, pursued them across the river, but the powder of the Irish having got wet, they had to abandon the pursuit and the English reached Sligo in safety.

Borough, the Deputy, having reached Ulster in safety with all his forces, took possession of Armagh, which had been abandoned by O'Neill after he had destroyed the fortifications. A few miles northward was Portmore, a fort erected by the English on the banks of the Blackwater, commanding the ford across which lay the road to

Dungannon, O'Neill's stronghold. The modern Blackwatertown is supposed to be near the site of Portmore. After the capture of Armagh the Irish took this fort and expelled the small garrison from it, and now Borough was marching on it with 1,500 men, to place it once more in the hands of the English. He met with some slight resistance on the way, but ultimately forced a passage across the river and took the fort by storm, the Irish garrison, however, numbering only forty men. The official despatches on the subject mention that the rampart was so high, the ditch so deep, and the hedge before both so plashed (interwoven) that the 1,000 English had enough to do, without resistance of any enemy, to break through the one and scramble up the other. It is also mentioned that the embrasures of the fort were so badly constructed that the cannon could only sweep the slopes of the opposite hill, while the ford was left unguarded except by musketeers.

While they were engaged in prayers and thanksgivings for this success, the English were interrupted by the reappearance of the Irish in an unexpected quarter, commanded by O'Neill in person. The Deputy ordered an advance against them, but it was repulsed by the masterly tactics of O'Neill, who had divided his force into two parties sufficiently near to assist each other. When the attack was made the two divisions coalesced to meet it, and in the engagement which ensued the Deputy was severely wounded. He died at Newry shortly afterwards, it is supposed, of his injuries. The Earl of Kildare was also dangerously wounded, and twice thrown from his horse in the heat of battle. His two foster-brothers, in attempting to lift him on his horse again, were slain by his side, and he died in a few days afterwards, whether of grief or of his wounds it is not certain.

Among the slain were Sir Francis Vaughan, the Deputy's brother-in-law, Thomas Waller, Robert Turner, and many other officers of distinction.

This battle was fought at a place called Drumfinch, between Blackwatertown and Benburb.

After this reverse the English built some additions to the fort, in which they placed a garrison

of 300 men under a brave officer named Williams. They then retreated to Newry, whence they marched southward into the Pale, leaving Portmore and its garrison to defend themselves single-handed against the Irish. No sooner had the English retired than O'Neill attacked the fort with a storming party and scaling ladders which, however, proved too short, but the heroic garrison met his assaults with such determination and bravery that 34 of his men were left dead in the ditch, and O'Neill had to give up all hope of taking the place by force.

On the death of Lord Berough, the Government appointed Archbishop Loftus and Sir Robert Gardiner Lords Justices, and made Lord Ormonde commander-in-chief of the army. About Christmas the Earls of Ormonde and Thomond, having been authorised by the Queen to treat with O'Neill, proceeded to the north and remained for three days in conference with him and O'Donnell, endeavouring to come to terms with them. In consequence of an arrangement then made, a truce was to be observed for eight weeks, while the Government communicated his demands to Queen Elizabeth.

#### V.—BELLINABOY, OR THE YELLOW FORD.\*



THE O'NEILL ARMS—"THE BLOODY HAND."

ABOUT Christmas, 1597, the conference mentioned in our last article took place with Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone, after which his demands were submitted to Queen Elizabeth. About the middle of the following March her answer was received, and another conference was held to communicate it to him. Her Majesty was willing to pardon him upon certain specified conditions, some of which were fair enough, but others were entirely unreasonable, and these latter he objected to. An arrangement of some kind seems to have been concluded, for the pardon was actually drawn up, bearing date 11th April, 1598, and sealed with the Great Seal of Ireland. O'Neill, however, now refused to accept it, whether in

consequence of any further disagreement it is difficult to say, but it is certain that he never acknowledged it.

On the 7th June the last truce expired, and two days afterwards O'Neill appeared with an army before the fort of Portmore "swearing by his barbarous hand that he would not depart till he had carried it." The brave Williams and his men inside the fort were by this time nearly famished with hunger; they had eaten all their horses, every blade of grass, and every bit of weed and herbage that grew upon the walls; and each morning they anxiously strained their eyes over the southern hills, hoping to see the English flag fluttering in the breeze or their spears glinting in the morning sun.

They still managed to subsist a while by making sallies out of the fort and capturing some of the Irish troop horses; but even that forlorn hope was now cut off, for O'Neill surrounded the fort with immense trenches more than a mile in length, several feet deep, with a great thorny hedge over it. Every approach to that unhappy fort was "plashed" (rendered impassable with felled trees and interwoven boughs), and the Irish army were so scientifically distributed that it was impossible for a relieving force to approach from any quarter without fighting a battle under every disadvantage.

\* In writing the account of this famous battle, I have used the following authorities:—

State Papers of Queen Elizabeth on "The Journey of the Blackwater," published in *Kilkenny Archaeological Journal* for 1856-7; *Annals of the Four Masters*; *Haverty's History of Ireland*; *Moryson's History of Ireland*; *Facsimiles of National MSS.*, edited by John T. Gilbert, Esq., M.R.I.A.

When messengers brought this news to Dublin it caused great anxiety; frequent and prolonged meetings of the Council were held in the Castle, and opinions were divided as to the course to be pursued. Some would have Williams make the best terms he could and surrender the fort, but this proposal was overruled by the military element. Marshal Bagenal urged that an expedition should at once start for the relief of Portmore under his own command, and ultimately this suggestion was adopted. Now, it happened that O'Neill and Bagenal were bitter personal enemies, for Tyrone had married the Marshal's sister much against her brother's wishes, and out of this grew a deadly feud between them; so that the Government thought no fitter man could be chosen to crush this proud northern rebel than his brother-in-law and mortal enemy, Marshal Sir Harry Bagenal.



ON THE BLACKWATER.

Accordingly, early in August the expedition, consisting of 4,000 foot, 400 horse, and some field artillery, started from Dublin in command of the Marshal and Sir Thomas Wingfield, bringing with them supplies and ammunition for Portmore. The Government had nearly double that number of troops available, but by an unaccountable act of stupidity, instead of despatching their whole forces against O'Neill, they divided them, sending half under Ormonde against the Cavenaghs of Leinster. Bagenal and his army marched by Drogheda, Dundalk, and Newry, to Armagh, where they pitched their camp immediately outside the city walls. From here they could see O'Neill with his

army preparing to contest their passage across the Callan river, which they must cross on their way to Portmore, five miles distant.

On Monday, 14th August, 1598, the English marched from Armagh with bands playing and colours flying. They advanced in six regiments formed into three divisions, about half a mile distant from each other, the van being commanded by Colonel Cosby, the middle or main body by Sir Thomas Wingfield, and the rear by Colonel Cunie. Marshal Bagenal rode in the van. The horse was divided into two bodies, and commanded by Sir Calisthenes Brooke. When they had marched about half a mile from Armagh, their course lay between a bog on the one side and a wood at the other, and here the Irish sharpshooters, who had concealed themselves in the brushwood at the sides, opened a heavy fire upon them, which was maintained the whole way to the trench. This trench was a formidable obstacle; it was five feet wide, four feet deep, and plashed with thorn bushes. The vanguard had a large field-piece, which stuck fast in the boggy ground as they approached the trench; but, being exposed to a heavy fire, they had to leave it behind them. They then charged the Irish, and forced their way across the trench. The main body, under Sir Thomas Wingfield, next coming up, endeavoured to extricate the gun, but the Irish crowding around them, killed the oxen that drew it, and one of the wheels breaking, the main body had likewise to abandon it. The despatches say that it caused serious obstruction to the troops from lying right in the line of march. Meanwhile the vanguard, having passed the trench, were advancing, and, having crossed some rising ground, were lost to view from the remainder of the army. The main body having been considerably delayed by the field-piece, Marshal Bagenal sent a message to the vanguard to return and wait for the rest. All this time heavy firing was heard from the rear, and the Marshal, fearing that the last division was hard beset, sent Wingfield to its assistance, while he himself went forward to the van. Just then Wingfield saw the rear coming up, and spurred forward to tell the Marshal, who raised his vizor to look. At that same instant a bullet from an unknown mark-

man pierced his brain, and the brave Bageual fell dead at Wingfield's feet.

When the vanguard, already nearly overpowered by the Irish, received the order to return, it appears to have alarmed them considerably, for they wheeled about in so disorderly a fashion that the Irish instantly fell upon them, broke their ranks, and drove them back in a confused body to the trench, where they were nearly all slain, and their colours captured. The survivors, retreating, wildly rushed into the ranks of the advancing main body, causing considerable confusion. At the same time a soldier, carelessly replenishing his pouch, let fall a spark into one of the barrels of powder, exploding it and several others beside it. The explosion was tremendous, and the surrounding hilly ground was enveloped in a dense smoke for the rest of the day. By this accident many of the English were killed and another of their pieces disabled; and before they could recover from their confusion they were charged by the Irish cavalry, led by O'Neill in person. The result was utter rout and slaughter—the English retreating in a disorderly mass to Armagh, pursued by the Irish the whole way, "in couples, in scores, in thirties, and in hundreds." The English loss was about 2,000, and the Irish about 400.

The survivors retreated to Armagh and shut themselves up in the town. They found, however, on taking count of the provisions, that they had not more than would suffice for ten days at the utmost, and that there was no provender at all for the horses. It was therefore proposed by some that they should retreat to Newry. But as Newry was twenty miles off, and the road lay through a broken and difficult country, the chances were that, pursued and harassed by the enemy the whole way, few would ever reach the friendly shelter of its walls. In this perplexity the officers conferred long together and decided that the best plan was for Captain Montague, in command of the horse, to attempt to cut his way that very night through the cordon of Irish that environed the walls, and then ride with all possible speed to Newry and southwards to alarm the Pale and bring relief. Captain Montague assented to this arrangement, stating that he was willing to risk his life in so good a cause, and he and his party

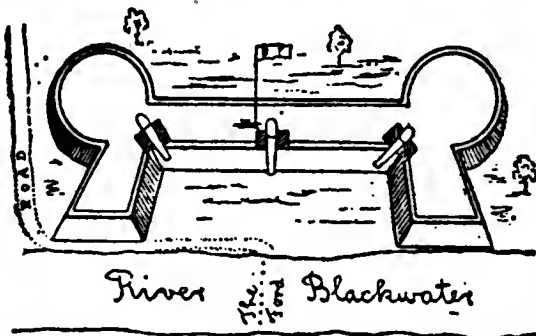
succeeded that night in escaping with trifling loss, though he was pursued for several miles towards Newry.

Meanwhile the Irish continued to besiege Armagh, and both parties kept up a fire at each other for three days, at the expiration of which time the English ceased hostilities and sent messengers to the Irish to say that Portmore would be surrendered if its garrison were permitted to come to Armagh unmolested, after which they engaged to surrender Armagh itself if given quarter and escorted to their own territory. The Irish then held a council to consider this offer; some were for putting all the garrison to the sword, but they finally agreed to the conditions proposed, and sent a message back to that effect. A number of Irish and English officers then proceeded to Portmore, and, on their telling the garrison how the case stood, Williams surrendered the fort, and he and his famished companions came to Armagh to join the rest. They were then all escorted into English territory.

It should be mentioned that it was not a usual proceeding in these days to allow a garrison to surrender on such easy terms—in fact it was the almost universal practice of English commanders to put them all to the sword, so that this act of O'Neill shows that he was a man of humane and generous disposition.

The Battle of the Yellow Ford was undoubtedly the greatest defeat ever received by the English upon Irish soil—it was the climax of a long series of successes achieved by O'Neill, and nearly severed the slender connection between the two countries. Camden says of it—"Tyrone triumphed to his heart's desire over his adversary, and obtained a remarkable victory over the English; and doubtless, since the time they first set foot in Ireland, they never received a greater overthrow—thirteen stout captains being slain and 1,500 of the common soldiers, who, being scattered by a shameful flight all the fields over, were slain and vanquished by the enemy. This was a glorious victory for the rebels, and of special advantage, for hereby they got both arms and provisions, and Tyrone's name was cried up all over Ireland as the author of their liberty."

Why, it may be asked, did not O'Neill follow up the victory by marching on Dublin? Why did he permit the garrison of Armagh to march southwards and swell the ranks of the attenuated army of the Pale? There was then, apparently, no garrison in Dublin, and a thousand men would have captured the Castle without difficulty—indeed, its terror-stricken warders would probably have surrendered it without a struggle. The only explanation of this apparent remissness is that O'Neill probably knew that even if he secured possession of the capital he could not hope to hold it long against the myriads that would be despatched against him, so that in this respect he perhaps only showed his sound judgment.



THE FORT OF PORTMORE, 1598 (200 PACES LONG).  
(From a contemporary drawing.)

The battle was essentially a scientific one—a game of skill between two brave commanders and consummate tacticians, and is most interesting to analyse in detail. Both sides fought with great valour, and there has been no accusation of cowardice made by either. Briefly summarised, the proximate causes of the defeat may be said to be—(1) The superior generalship of O'Neill, who completely out-maneuvred his adversary. (2) The excessive distance which intervened between the English vanguard, main body, and rear guard respectively, whereby each of these divisions was cut to pieces before the others could come to its assistance; and (3) the disastrous explosion of the powder magazine, which disranked and disorganised the English lines, so that they fell easy victims to the impetuous charge of the Irish cavalry.

Two miles due north of Armagh, not far from the Callan river, is a small well-de-

fined marsh or bog, which still retains the historic name of "Bellanaboy." The thickest of the fight took place upon this spot; and a quarter of a mile north of it stands a whitethorn bush called "Great Man's Thorn Tree," under which, according to tradition, sleeps the brave Marshal Sir Harry Bagenal, who fell as befitted a soldier. Near the battlefield is "the Yellow Ford" across the Callan River. On the 6-inch Ordnance Survey map of the district the battlefield is marked by crossed swords above the words "Beale-atha-buidhe, 1598."

A strange variety of weapons were used in this battle—guns, matchlocks, cross-bows, long bows, battle-axes, swords, spears, and lances. The English wore armour, but the Irish fought as usual in their linen tunics.

The lengthy despatches and State correspondence on "The Journey of the Blackwater," as this campaign was called, leave no doubt that the blockade of Portmore and the subsequent defeat of the relieving force inspired the Government with the greatest terror. One of the letters (which, however, was never delivered) is from the Lords Justices to Tyrone, begging of him to spare the survivors of the army cooped up in Armagh and Portmore, lest he should further incense her Majesty. Queen Elizabeth, who seems to have had more courage than all her Irish councillors, was furious when she read this communication, and wrote back a scathing letter to the Lords Justices reproaching them for their meanness and cowardice. The letters from the Lords Justices to the English Privy Council are couched in the most abject and suppliant language, praying for assistance to save them from the Irish "rebellers."

The following spirited lines by Drennan are perhaps the best on the subject:—

By O'Neill close beleagu'ed, the spirits might droop  
Of the Saxon three hundred shut up in the coop,  
Till Bagnal drew forth his Toledo, and swore  
On the sword of a soldier to succour Portmore.

His veteran troops in the foreign wars tried,  
Their features now bronzed, and how haughty their  
stride,  
Stepped steadily on; it was thrilling to see  
That thunder-cloud brooding o'er Beal-an-a-bui!

The flash of their armour, inlaid with fine gold,  
Gleaming matchlocks and cannons that mutteringly  
rolled,

With the tramp and the clank of those stern cuirassiers,  
Dyed in blood of the Flemish and French cavaliers.

Land of Owen Abou! and the Irish rushed on :  
The fee fir'd but one volley—their gunners are gone.  
Before the bare bosoms the steel coats have fled,  
Or despite casque or corselet, lie dying or dead.

And brave Harry Bagnal, he fell while he fought,  
With many gay gallants : they slept as men ought,

Their faces to Heaven : there were others, alack :  
By pikes overtaken, and taken aback.

And the Irish got clothing, coin, colours, great store,  
Arms, forage, and provender—plunder *galore*.  
They munched the white manchets, they champed the  
brown chine,  
Fuliluah for that day, how the natives did dine!

The chieftain looked on, when O'Shanaghan rose,  
And cried: "Hearken, O'Neill, I've a health to propose—  
To our Sassanach hosts," and all quaffed in huge glee,  
With *Cead mille failthe go!* BEAL-AN-A-BUI!

## THE DISASTROUS CAMPAIGN OF ESSEX.



BAGENAL'S death and the signal disaster at the Yellow Ford caused great consternation in England. The military prowess of O'Neill, great as it was, was exaggerated, and Moryson says of him—"The generall voyce was of Tyrone amongst the English after the defeat of Blackwater, as of Hannibal among the Romans after the defeat of Cannæ."

Elizabeth was greatly exasperated at the catastrophe and wrote indignant letters to the Irish Government, upbraiding them for dividing and wasting their forces in petty contentions with the rebels of Leinster. To replace Bagenal, who was an honourable man, she sent Sir Richard Bingham, an officer who had distinguished himself by the most savage acts of brutal butchery in Connaught. He died, however, almost immediately on landing in Dublin, so that he had not time to repeat his exploits. Sir Samuel Bagenal, brother of the late Marshal, was then sent to Ireland with 2,000 men to replace the losses at the Yellow Ford.

England's best generals—De Burgh, Kildare, Norris, and Bagenal—had now been successively hurled back in ignominious defeat from the frontiers of Ulster, and Elizabeth felt that if Ireland were to be retained at all it would be only by a supreme effort of all the powers of the empire. By some strange infatuation she appointed as Lord Lieutenant her Court favourite, Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, a young man only 22 years of age, with little experience and absolutely devoid of prudence and judgment. She invested him with

plenary powers—almost those of a king—and entrusted to his command a vast army of 20,000 foot and 2,000 horse, one of the largest ever sent into Ireland. His instructions were to neglect all the insurgents of lesser note, and on landing to march at once with all his forces to reduce rebellious Ulster. With this splendid army he landed in Dublin on the 15th April, 1599, and was sworn in the same day.

But now his ineptitude became manifest. In direct violation of his instructions he divided his army, sending 3,500 men, under Sir Henry Harrington, to Wicklow to check the O'Byrnes and O'Tooles, 3,000 more to Sir Conyers Clifford in Connaught, and he also sent garrisons to Dundalk, Drogheda, and Naas. Thus his fine army was soon scattered all over the country, and he had now but 7,000 left. With these he marched against the Munster Geraldines, instead of proceeding against O'Neill, as he had been ordered. Having reached Athy he seized a fortified bridge across the Barrow, by which he advanced with his force into the Queen's County. He then proceeded by the Castle of Rheban on to the English fortress of Maryborough, which he victualled, and next encamped on the slopes of a high hill called Crosby Duff, about three miles farther southward. From the summit of this hill, which commanded an extensive view, he surveyed the surrounding country, and directed his march accordingly. But he was not unobserved. Owny O'More hung on his flank, and, with his scouts securely posted on the Dysart hills, was kept apprised of every movement.

At Crosby Duff, Essex marshalled his ranks and advanced by the Ballykneockan cross-roads towards Ballyroan, knowing that the enemy were somewhere in that direction. His course lay through almost impenetrable woods, which afforded secure cover for the Irish, and enabled them to form an ambushade. The road here traversed a narrow winding defile, and this place Owny O'More selected for the attack. The engagement which ensued has been minutely described by Sir John Harrington, an English officer who fought on the occasion. His account is published in "*Tracts Relative to Ireland*," Vol. II.

The road passed for a mile through a dense wood, and was plashed at the sides with trees and boughs, behind which the Irish maintained an intermittent fire, and at one place they had dug a deep trench across the road to delay the passage of the English. Adjoining the wood were bogs, quite safe to the lightly-equipped Irish, but which the English dared not attempt, and in a small village between the wood and the bog the Irish were massed in considerable numbers.

To force a passage through this dangerous defile Essex divided his army into three divisions. Before the vanguard marched the forlorn hope, consisting of "forty shot and twenty short weapons," and they were ordered not to discharge them "until they presented them at the rebels' breasts in the trenches," and were to suddenly enter the trench at either side of the vanguard. The baggage and part of the horse preceded the main body, and in front of the last division were placed the remainder of the horse, except thirty, who in command of an officer completed the rear.

The Irish apparently allowed the first division to pass unmolested and then fiercely attacked the middle and rear, throwing them into partial confusion. Meanwhile the vanguard had hurried on till they emerged from the pass into the open plain, where they halted for the rest to come up. The English of course greatly outnumbered their assailants, and would have easily defeated them in the open, but, being unable to fight to advantage in the pass, the battle partook of the nature of a running attack by the Irish and a hurried march by the English to gain the open country.

About fifty years ago, when the foundations of an old building near Ballykneockan House were being excavated, cartloads of human remains were exhumed and removed by the workmen. Considerable quantities of these remains also lie in the high gravelly ground between Ballykneockan cross-roads and the Castle. The tradition of a great battle having been fought here is still quite vivid among the peasantry of the neighbourhood, who say that the fight raged for about half a mile along the road, which was strewn with dead bodies. The battle terminated at a bog called 'Momeen-na-fulla,' meaning "the little bog of the blood" in which skulls, human remains, and arms have been found from time to time.

On account of the great number of plumed helmets found in the pass after the battle it got the name of Barnaglitty or "The Pass of the Plumes." This name is, however, now obsolete and forgotten.

It should be mentioned that the site of this battle was unknown until it was satisfactorily identified and all controversy set at rest by the investigations of the Rev John Canon O'Hanlon, M R I A, to whose paper on the subject in the Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy I am indebted for my local details.

This was the first reverse experienced by Essex, and from the letters he wrote to the Privy Council subsequently it seems to have impressed him with a greater respect for the fighting powers of the Irish than he previously had.

After this engagement Essex marched to Ballyragget, and thence to Kilkenny, "a eytty where the Earl of Ormond is resident." Here he was received with great demonstrations by the English inhabitants. He next proceeded by Clonmel to Cahir, where "in the midst of the ryver Suyre lyeth an Iland, the same a naturall rocke, and upon yt a castle which, although it may be not built with any great arte, yet is the scite such by nature that yt may be said to be inexpugnable." ("*Tracts Relative to Ireland*.") When he reached the castle he sent officers to parley with the garrison, but failing to induce them to surrender he made preparations for a siege. Accordingly he planted cannon in position, and, having sent 300 men to take possession of

the bawn who expelled "these beastes," as the Irish are here elegantly designated, he commenced a vigorous cannonade which soon breached the walls. Hearing that some reinforcements were advancing from Mitchelstown to the relief of the castle, he sent Sir Christopher St. Lawrence, with 300 men, to break down a bridge over which the relieving force would have to pass.

The garrison, seeing themselves thus cut off from this expected relief, endeavoured to leave the castle under cover of the night, but they were discovered by the English, who fell upon them, and killed about eighty of them. The English then took possession of the castle and placed a strong garrison in it, and Essex advanced to Limerick, leaving the wounded at Clonmel.



CAHIR CASTLE.

While the English were storming Cahir Castle, Sir Thomas Norris, Governor of Munster, came to Kilmallock to meet Essex, as he knew he would pass that way. He had been nearly a fortnight in the town before the Earl arrived, and in the interval was in the habit of daily scouring the surrounding mountains accompanied by his soldiers to try if he could not capture or kill some of the "Irish rebbels." He happened one day to meet a well-known rebel, one of the Burkes of Castleconnell, with about 100 Irish soldiers; a sharp conflict ensued in which some 20 of the

Irish were killed, but Norris received his death wound, and was carried to Kilmallock where he died six weeks later.

Meanwhile bad news began to arrive from other parts of the country, and ill luck appeared to attend all the expeditions. Sir Henry Harrington sustained a serious reverse at Ranelagh, near Balinglass, in county Wicklow, of which a most detailed account is given by himself. According to this narrative he set out with his troops from Wicklow and marched to Ranelagh, but ascertaining that the Irish were massed in great force in the neighbourhood he attempted to return next day. The Irish followed and soon overtook him, keeping up a running fight for some miles. Another party of the Irish took a short cut to a ford, across which the English were to pass, and intercepted their van. The main body of the English were some distance behind, and before they could come up the vanguard fired off their pieces recklessly, and then, throwing them away, turned and fled. One of the officers who had charge of the colours also ran away, and a large number of pikemen in the main body broke from the ranks and followed his example, throwing away their arms, and even stripping themselves of their clothes! Harrington writes—"All that I or their captains could do could never make one of them once to turn his face towards the rebels."

Another officer, Captain Atherton writes, "When we came to the rear we found some of the rebels killing our men, they making no resistance, nor once turning their faces towards their enemies"—"never offered to turn or speak, but as men without sense or feeling, ran one upon another's back, it being not possible to break, by reason of the captains, who endeavoured by all means to stay them, but in vain."

Essex, on hearing of this disgraceful defeat, hastened to Dublin, and held a courtmartial on those responsible, and the lieutenant, who had charge of the colours, with one out of every ten soldiers, were executed. Sir Henry Harrington was also suspended for a time, though he was not to blame in the matter.

## THE BATTLE OF THE CURLIEU PASS.



**I**N June, 1599, Essex left Limerick city, and proceeded to Adare. Next day as he marched westward, he was met by the Earl of Desmond and his army, who contested his progress the whole of that day, killing a number of his men and delaying him so that he was only able to reach Askeaton that evening. The following day Essex and Ormonde, after consultation, decided to leave part of their ammunition and stores in the Castle of Askeaton, and not to proceed further westward into Munster on account of the menacing attitude of the Irish chiefs. On their return eastwards next day they were again attacked by the Geraldines under Desmond at a place called Finniterstown, in the parish of Adare, ten miles south-west of Limerick. Here, by the wooded banks of the Maigue, in the vale of "Sweet Adare," a sanguinary conflict ensued, and the sylvan solitudes were rudely disturbed by the crash and roar of musketry from the thickets adjoining the road, where the Irish had concealed themselves in ambuscade. In this action Sir Henry Norris received a bullet wound, of which he died about two months after; he was the third of the brothers Norris that fell in these fruitless Irish wars. Essex then proceeded to Kilmallock, and having rested his army there for three days, he directed his course southward through the pass of Barna Derg; thence, by Conna and Mogeely, he journeyed to Fermoy, where he crossed the Blackwater by a ford, and marched to Lismore in Waterford.

During all this marching and countermarching through the country, the Irish never ceased their attacks. Inferior in numbers, discipline,

and equipment to the English, they wisely avoided general engagements, but hung on their flanks and rear, dogged their footsteps, cut off stragglers, and greatly impeded their movements.

From Lismore Essex marched to Dungarvan and Waterford, still followed by the Geraldines; but at Waterford they left him and returned to their own country. He remained for some days in Waterford examining the forts and harbours; he also inspected the fort of Duncannon in the county Wexford, which was built to command the passage to Waterford harbour. This fort was unanimously condemned by the military officers as useless, "for the site is so overtopped by an eminent height not distant from it more than 150 paces, that no man can stand secure in the piazza of the forte" (*Tracts Rel. to Ireland. Vol II. Dymmek*). The modern Duncannon is a prettily situated fishing village, nearly opposite Passage, on "The lovely green banks of the Suir." From the many other defects of this so-called fort, enumerated in detail by Dymmek, a bombardment of passing ships must have been a comparatively harmless amusement to all parties concerned.

From Waterford Essex marched to Ennis-corthy, and along the coast by Arklow, Wicklow, and Newcastle, in each of which places was a castle held by an English garrison. He reached Dublin at last with the shattered remnants of his army, worn out with sickness and fatigue after their disastrous march, for they were followed the whole way from Waterford by the Leinster Irish, who contested every mile of their progress, and thinned their ranks in innumerable skirmishes and ambuscades.

In all this expedition Essex failed to exact the submission of even one of the rebel chiefs, and the only success he could boast of was the capture of Cahir Castle. No wonder indeed that Elizabeth was at last beginning to lose patience with him.

When he had sufficiently rested his army in Dublin he set out on another expedition, marching through Philipstown in King's County, or Offaly, as it was then called, and

from that to Ballycowan, near Tullamore, where he was joined, according to arrangement, by Sir Conyers Clifford, Governor of Connaught, and his army. Clifford, in his march from Galway, was sore beset by the Irish at a place called Fircall, where a number of his men were killed in the fastnesses of a dense forest through which they passed. Having given detailed instructions to Clifford, Essex once more returned to Dublin, and Clifford hastened to Galway to make preparations for a campaign against the Irish.

O'Connor Sligo, an Irish chieftain who was in alliance with the English, had accompanied Essex during part of his march through Munster, after which he proceeded to Galway to confer with Sir Conyers Clifford. He then retired to his castle at Collooney—an almost impregnable stronghold—and shut himself up there. Red Hugh O'Donnell, hearing of his return, resolved to besiege him in his fortress, and, marching with his army, surrounded the place on all sides, keeping guards to watch night and day lest anyone should escape from or into the castle.

Meanwhile O'Connor had contrived to send news of his distressed condition to Dublin, upon which Essex summoned Clifford to meet him at Fircall, near Tullamore, where they arranged that supplies for the castle should be sent by sea from Galway to Collooney in charge of Theobald-na-long, while Clifford himself, in command of the army of Connaught, was to proceed by land, and raise the blockade. The fleet duly arrived in Sligo Bay, where they awaited Clifford, as they were unable to approach the castle on account of O'Donnell's forces. Clifford had meanwhile marched to Roscommon, and thence to Boyle, where his army remained in the Abbey while arrangements were being completed for the march.

When O'Donnell learned of Clifford's movements he left a sufficient besieging party at the castle under Nial Garv O'Donnell, while he, with the remainder of his forces, marched southwards, and took up a strong position on a pass through the Curliou Mountains, about three miles north of Boyle. Through this pass of Ballaghboy lay the only road from Boyle to Collooney, as a glance at the map will show. From the time of his arrival O'Donnell had kept scouts constantly posted on

the summits of the mountains overlooking Boyle, so that the English could not leave the town unnoticed. In the early dawn of 15th August these scouts noticed an unusual commotion in Boyle Abbey—raising of standards, blowing of trumpets, and massing of troops—and presently the army slowly defiled out of the town. With all possible speed they ran down the mountain and brought the news to O'Donnell, who at once sent forward a party of sharpshooters in advance of the main body, to delay and disorganise the English before they should reach the difficult part of the pass, where the Irish were massed in force. He then dismounted his cavalry, and placed them to fight among the infantry on account of the broken nature of the ground.

The English were now approaching the pass; their vanguard was commanded by Sir Alexander Ratcliff, the main body by Lord Clanricarde's son, and the rear by Sir Arthur Savage. The cavalry were posted half way between Boyle and the entrance to the pass, and were to remain there till the infantry had effected a passage. About a quarter of a mile from the entrance the Irish had erected a barricade, from behind which some 400 of them opened fire on the English as they advanced. The English, however, stormed and forced this barricade, driving the Irish out of it, after which the vanguard, followed by the rest of the army, proceeded by a narrow path to a bog, where a large body of the Irish had taken up a position. Sir Alexander Ratcliff, at the head of his men, marched across the bog to attack them, but before he had advanced very far he received a shot in the face which wounded him severely. Undaunted, however, he persisted, till another shot in the leg quite disabled him, upon which two of his officers attempted to carry him to the rear, but one of them was killed while so assisting him, and Ratcliff himself was shot dead immediately after.

Captain Cosby, who was next in command, appears to have acted with considerable cowardice and indecision, for, after the death of Ratcliff, instead of attempting to rally his men, he hesitated as if to retreat, which so discouraged them that they fled in complete rout.

The vanguard in retreat so alarmed the main body that they turned likewise and fled, and the rearguard followed their example. Thus in a short space of time the whole army was broken up and confused, although the main body of the Irish had not yet made their appearance. About this time another Irish chief, named O'Rourke, arrived on the field with a large body of infantry, and assisted in the attack.

Sir Conyers Clifford vainly endeavoured to stem the ebbing tide of battle, but being severely wounded, two of his lieutenants seized him and forced him to retire with them. But when he saw his army in utter rout, bursting from them in a fury, sword in hand, he rushed into the midst of his pursuers and bravely fell, overpowered by numbers.

The whole army in a disorderly mass now made for Boyle, whither they were hotly pursued by the Irish, who slew great numbers of them. They would probably have been all killed but for the courageous conduct of Sir Griffin Markham, Governor of Boyle, who, when he saw his countrymen in retreat, sallied out with his troops and charged the Irish so fiercely that they were forced to abandon the pursuit.

Clifford's tragic death was greatly regretted by the Irish, for he was a wise and just governor, and was much respected by the inhabitants of Connaught. His body was interred with solemn ceremonial in the monastery of the Sacred Trinity on an island in Lough Key, while his head was sent to Cellooney as proof of the victory. When O'Connor, in Cellooney Castle, was told of the defeat of the English he would not believe it till Clifford's head was shown to him, upon which he surrendered unconditionally, and was pardoned

by O'Donnell, who magnanimously restored to him his estates and property.

The celebrated pass through the Curliu Mountains in which this battle took place is called Bealach-Buidhe, meaning "The Yellow Pass." It gives name to the townland of Ballaghboy, in the parish of Aughanagh, barony of Tirerrill, and county of Sligo.

The ancient road which traverses the pass is now generally known as Boher-Bwee (the Yellow-road), and sometimes Boher-an-Irla-Roe, i.e.—The Red Earl's-road (Red Hugh O'Donnell). It branches to the left from the road leading northwards by the Fair Green from Bridge-street, Boyle, and was in former times the main road to Sligo; it is still traceable, and in many places passable along its course.

Two miles north of Boyle, in the townland of Garroo, and about 150 yards to the right of this ancient road, is a standing stone, called "The Governor's Monument," which according to tradition marks the spot where Clifford, disdaining flight, bravely died facing his foes. Long afterwards one of the Kingston (Lorton) family erected to his memory a monument, originally in the form of an octagonal pillar about 8 feet high, built of chiselled limestone. Four feet of this octagon was standing until about 1817, when the stones were removed by some local barbarian, who used them in building a house, where they may still be seen. Lord Lorton's agent thereupon caused the present stone to be set up in its place.

The name "Curliu" as applied to those mountains is apt to mislead; it may therefore be not amiss to mention that it is an Anglicised form of "Gorsliabh," the original name, which means "rugged hill." They are consequently in no way indebted to the curlew bird for their nomenclature.



## THE DOWNFALL OF ESSEX AND THE CAMPAIGN OF MOUNTJOY AND CAREW.

**A**FTER the Battle of the Curlious, Essex wrote to England for further reinforcements; but by this time Elizabeth had lost all confidence in him, and her patience was well-nigh exhausted. She sent him more troops, however, and with these he marched northwards into

Louth, where O'Neill was encamped. O'Neill sent messengers to request a conference with him, and on the 8th September, 1599, these two commanders met at the ford of Ballaclinch, now spanned by Anaghclart Bridge across the Lagan, where it forms the boundary between the counties Louth and Monaghan. Having posted small bodies of their respective troops on the rising ground at either side, they advanced to meet, and O'Neill, riding into the middle of the river, where he remained during the whole interview, saluted the Viceroy with great respect.

The interview lasted for over an hour, without witnesses, and historians have variously conjectured what transpired, each, of course, deducing conclusions favourable to his own views; but it has been supposed by some that the subject was of a mere startling nature than generally believed, involving the deposition of the Queen and the usurpation of the throne by Essex.

The principal officers from each side were then summoned and a formal parley held, at which a truce was agreed to, lasting till May, 1600, terminable, however, at a fortnight's notice from either party.

Whatever may have been the truth as to this conference, it excited deep suspicions at the English Court, particularly in the mind of Elizabeth. Essex left Ireland suddenly and without permission to explain matters, but on presenting himself before the Queen she at once ordered him to be arrested and confined in the Tower.

He was shortly afterwards released, but then, instead of bearing himself with caution, he began to inveigh openly against the Queen, stating that "she grew old and cankered, and that her mind was become as crooked as her carcase." His enemies, who then prevailed at Court, on hearing of this, summoned him to the Council, but he refused to attend, and armed some of his followers to resist. After an insane attempt at insurrection and some slight bloodshed, this unhappy young nobleman was arrested, and subsequently, on 25th February, 1601, beheaded in the Tower.

In December, 1599, O'Neill gave notice that he would renew hostilities in a fortnight, and accordingly in January he set out with an army of 3,000 men. He marched through Westmeath, Roscrea, and Tullamore to the Abbey of the Holy Cross, in Tipperary, where he paid homage to the sacred relics there. At Cashel he was joined by the Earl of Desmond, and the allied forces marched to Limerick and thence to Cork by the historic pass of Barna Derg, where in earlier times the good King Mahon was murdered. They then encamped at Inishcarra, on the river Lee, about six miles above Cork.

It happened one day that Sir Warham St Leger and Sir Henry Power, two of the Queen's Commissioners in Munster, were riding out for recreation a few miles from Cork, when they unexpectedly met Hugh Maguire ("Ford of the Biscuits"), accompanied by a few Irish soldiers. Maguire, levelling his lance, fiercely charged St Leger, who at the same instant fired a pistol at and mortally wounded his assailant. St Leger survived the combat only a few days, and Maguire, with his life's-blood fast ebbing away, rode into camp, where he expired almost immediately after receiving the last sacraments. The deaths of these two distinguished officers caused great regret in their respective camps.

Meanwhile Lord Mountjoy had been appointed Deputy of Ireland and Sir George Carew President of Munster. On 7th April, 1600, Carew set

out for Munster with a small army of about 1,000 men, being accompanied by the Deputy as far as Chapelizod. O'Neill, hearing that the new President was on the march against him, resolved to retire at once to his own territory in Ulster, which he succeeded in reaching in safety, although Mountjoy had marched to Mullingar with a considerable force to intercept him.

Early in April Carew reached Kilkenny, where he was requested by the Earl of Ormonde, Commander-in-Chief, to accompany him to Ballyragget, a few miles distant, to hold a conference with Owny O'More ("Pass of the Plumes"). The meeting place was a low boggy ground on the banks of a stream surrounded by shrubs and thickets, and there the Irish chieftain made his appearance, accompanied by a strong force of pikemen and cavalry.

After about an hour had been spent in fruitless negotiations, Ormonde's companions endeavoured to persuade him to depart, but he was unwilling to do so until he had spoken with a Jesuit named Archer, a leading spirit and adviser of the Irish. When he came forward the two fell into argument, in the course of which Ormonde called Archer a traitor and a rebel, and reproached him for inciting the Irish to rebellion. Archer became so excited and irritated by this offensive language that he raised his cane as if to strike Ormonde, upon which there was a general rush by both sides, each to protect their own spokesman. In the scuffle which ensued one of the O'Mores seized the reins of Ormonde's horse, while others of the Irish pulled the Earl from his saddle. If we are to believe "*Pacata Hibernia*" (letter of Carew and Thomond) the Irish by distributing themselves among the shrubs during the interval, had quietly encircled the small company of English, so that when the rupture took place the latter were instantly surrounded. Carew and Thomond, with more prudence than valour, put spurs to their horses, and, followed by their companions, precipitately fled the scene, escaping in safety to Kilkenny, while Ormonde remained a prisoner in the hands of the Irish. Only one man was killed on each side in this affray.

The capture by the Irish of so important a personage as the Earl of Ormonde caused much ex-

citement in Ireland and greatly distressed his family. According to the English despatches, however, he was well treated, though detained a close prisoner. He was ultimately liberated in the following June on payment of a ransom of £3,000 and giving hostages not to seek retaliation.

Though it is difficult to say whether his capture was preconcerted or not, there is no doubt that Ormonde showed little prudence or discretion, first in attending a meeting in so suspicious a place; and secondly, in so far forgetting himself as to use such unseemly language at the conference.

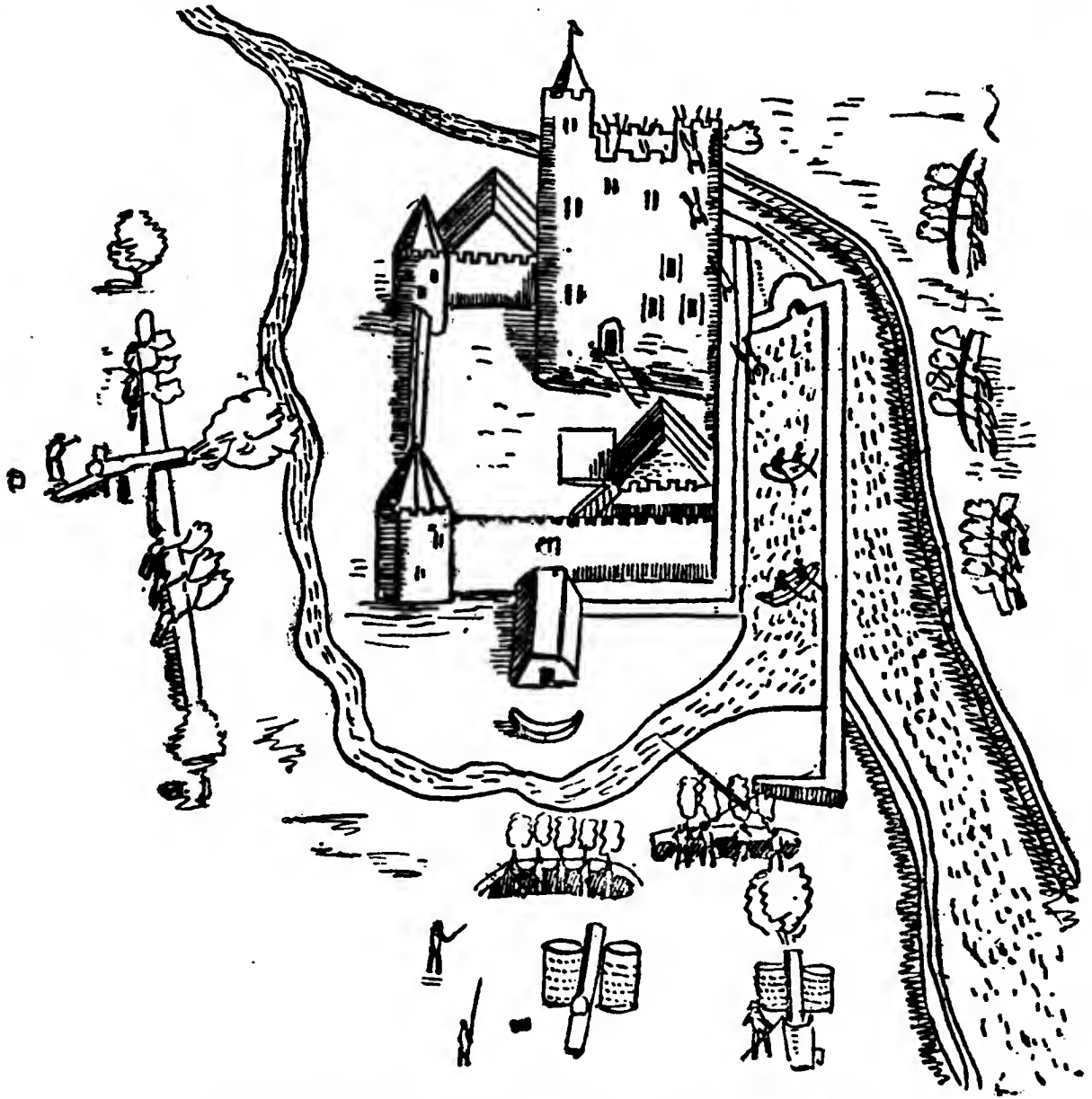
Immediately after this Carew and Thomond marched from Kilkenny to Waterford, and thence to Youghal and Cork. In July, 1600, they set out from Limerick, and, marching into the county Clare by the northern bank of the Shannon, they recrossed the river and laid siege to the Castle of Glin, on its banks, near the borders of Limerick and Kerry. The cannon were brought by river from Limerick in one of Lord Thomond's vessels. The English planted their artillery in position without any resistance from the garrison, after which the Knight of the Valley, the owner of the castle, requested an interview with Carew. This being granted, they held a parley for some time, but, failing to arrive at any satisfactory terms, the Knight left the camp and the bombardment commenced.

After about three hours' firing a breach was made in the wall under the great entrance hall of the castle, and one of the English captains was commanded to enter with some companies of soldiers. They succeeded in forcing an entrance, though stoutly resisted by the garrison, who then took possession of one of the adjoining towers, from which they kept up a fire on the English. The storming party then ascended a stairs, leading from the entrance hall to two turrets, which they captured and occupied, losing one officer and several men in the encounter.

As it was now over night, the storming party fortified themselves in the portions they had taken, and deferred further operations till the following morning. The constable of the castle, seeing no possibility of success and little hope of mercy,

made an attempt with some of his men to escape in the darkness of the night, but they were perceived by the English, who put them to the sword and fixed the constable's head on a stake to intimidate the rest. Early next morning

which the besieging party burned, causing such a smoke that for a couple of hours there was no going near the place. At the end of that time one of the Irish came down the stairs and offered on behalf of the rest to surrender. His offer was re-



THE STORMING OF GLIN CASTLE. (From *Pacata Hibernia*).

the remainder of the garrison established themselves in the upper part of the principal tower of the castle, to which the only approach was an extremely steep and narrow stairs. At the bottom of this stairs was a massive wooden doorway,

fused and he himself was killed, upon which the garrison retired, to the battlements determined to fight to the last.

The English now ascended the stairs without resistance until they reached a door at the top lead-

ing out upon the roof; as they entered at this door a dreadful struggle commenced, the Irish fighting with the energy of despair, but in vain, they were ultimately overcome by the superior numbers of their assailants, and the whole garrison, some 80 in number, were slain. The English accounts (*Pacata Hibernia*, and *Cox*) say that 11 of their men were killed and 21 wounded at this siege. The Irish had no cannon whatever, so that it is not surprising that they were worsted.

Carew remained here for five days repairing the castle, after which, leaving a garrison in it, he marched on Carrigafoyle Castle, about twelve miles westward on the Shannon, opposite Scatterry Island, which was surrendered to him without resistance by the owner, O'Connor Kerry. He also took or obtained possession of several other castles in the neighbourhood. The whole population of the surrounding country, seeing the English prevailing against them, abandoned their houses and fled to the mountains and forests.

Meanwhile the English Government resolved to concentrate all their efforts towards reducing O'Neill, and with this object despatched a fleet to Lough Foyle, conveying a powerful army and munitions of war, in command of Sir Henry Docwra, who, after some trifling skirmishes, marched on and occupied Londonderry. Red Hugh O'Donnell advanced to besiege him, on which Docwra made a vigorous sortie out of the town, but was repulsed with some loss, he himself being dangerously wounded in personal combat with O'Donnell.

Lord Mountjoy, the Viceroy, was during this time carrying on the war against the "rebels" of Leix, who, under their chieftain, Owny O'More, had recovered all their original possessions from the English except Port-Leix (*Maryborough*). But this famous guerilla chief, having incautiously exposed himself in one of the border skirmishes, fell pierced by a musket ball on 17th August, 1600. His death so discouraged his followers that the whole district of Leix soon afterwards reverted to the possession of the English.

Moryson says of this incident:—"But the best service at that time was the killing of Owny Mac

Rery, a bloody and bold young man, who lately had taken the Earl of Ormond prisoner, and had made great stir in Munster. He was the chief of the O'Mores' Sept in Leix, and by his death they were so discouraged that they never after held up their heads."

"Our captains, and by their example (for it was otherwise painful) the common soldiers, did cut down with their swords all the rebels' corn, to the value of £10,000 and upward, the only means by which they were to live and to keep their Bonnaghts (or hired soldiers). It seemed incredible that, by so barbarous inhabitants, the ground should be so manured, the fields so orderly fenced, the towns so frequently inhabited, and the highways and paths so well beaten as the Lord Deputy here found them. The reason whereof was that the Queen's forces during these wars never till then came among them" (!)

Early in 1601, after repeated attempts, Mountjoy forced the passage of the dangerous Moyry Pass, immediately north of Dundalk, and erected a castle on the northern approach to it. He then crossed the Blackwater and marched on the castle of Benburb, but the resistance he encountered on the way was such that he deemed it advisable to return to Dublin after having relieved the several garrisons along his route.

When he reached Dublin he issued proclamations offering £2,000 for the capture of O'Neill alive and £1,000 for his head, but even these tempting offers failed to effect any result. In all directions, however, disasters began to fall thickly upon the Irish. Nial Garv O'Donnell, who had fought with distinction against the English, now went over to them and was sent by Docwra with 500 troops to occupy the monastery of Donegal, where he was besieged by his kinsman and former comrade, Red Hugh O'Donnell. After a desperate midnight struggle, in which the building took fire, exploding the powder magazine, Nial Garv retreated to the monastery of Magherabeg, which he occupied instead. There he was again closely besieged till tidings came that a Spanish fleet had arrived in Kinsale to assist the Irish who were at war, upon which Red Hugh broke up camp and marched southward to Munster.

# THE SIEGE AND BATTLE OF KINSALE.



IN the evening of 20th September, 1601, a fisherman standing on the old Head of Kinsale, saw far out at sea a great fleet in full sail, bearing for Cork harbour. The ships, forty-five in number, passed close to the Head on their way, but as they were nearing the harbour a contrary wind arose which blew so hard that they were forced to tack about, and make for Kinsale instead. On 23rd September they entered the harbour of Kinsale with Spanish colours flying, and landed all their forces in the town. The long-promised aid from Spain had indeed come at last. The small English garrison evacuated the town without attempting resistance, and retired to Cork, while the Irish received the new-comers with great demonstrations of joy. The Spaniards, some 3,000 strong, were commanded by an officer named Don Juan Del Aguilha, who, on entering, at once proceeded to fortify the place and garrison the forts of Rincorran and Castle-na-park, at the eastern and western points of the harbour respectively.

Lord Mountjoy, the Deputy, was at Kilkenny when he heard of the invasion, and with Sir George Carew, President of Munster, hastened to reconnoitre the enemy's camp.

Kinsale is a seaport town situated at the mouth of the river Bandon, in County Cork, in a position extremely difficult to defend except against an attack by sea. It is hard to account for so unfortunate a choice by the Spaniards, unless indeed that they were driven into it by stress of weather, and even if such were the case there was nothing to prevent them leaving it when the weather had calmed. Both O'Neill and O'Donnell had besought the Spanish King to send his aid to Ulster, so as to effect a junction with the Irish forces there, but, now so far distant from them as Kinsale, the Spaniards were almost entirely unsupported. On landing, however, they lost no time in despatching messengers to the north to apprise the Irish chieftains of their ar-

rival, upon which Red Hugh O'Donnell, accompanied by many of the nobility of the North, at once set out on the march. Carew, with a superior force, marched from Kinsale and endeavoured to intercept him near Cashel, while St Lawrence, with the Army of the Pale, pursued him in the rear. But notwithstanding these formidable preparations for his destruction, O'Donnell succeeded in escaping by taking a circuitous route westward over the Slieve Felim Mountains in Tipperary and Limerick, accomplishing a journey of 40 English miles in a day with an army encumbered by baggage, a feat almost unprecedented in military history! Carew, after a frantic effort, abandoned the pursuit, despairing of overtaking so swift-footed a commander.

On 17th October the English army, numbering about 12,000 men, afterwards increased to 15,000, sat down before Kinsale, and encamped at a hill called Knock Robin, a mile and a-half north-east of the town. Towards the close of the month they sent a party to attack the fort of Rincorran, which the Spaniards attempted to relieve by sea, but were repulsed by the English ships in the harbour. The English cannon continued to play night and day upon the fort, and the Spaniards made another unsuccessful attempt to relieve it by land, inflicting, however, considerable loss on the besiegers. On 1st November, after a prolonged parley, the garrison, eighty in number, surrendered, and, with their commander, were sent prisoners to Cork.

About the middle of November the English vessels commenced a bombardment of the fort of Castle-na-park, at the other side of the harbour, but failed to effect anything further than damaging the battlements. They then sent ashore a storming party of 400 men to sap the foundations, but the garrison met them with such a tremendous volley of musketry and missiles of every description that they were forced to abandon the attempt with the loss of several of their number. On 20th November, after a heroic defence against hopeless odds, the small garrison (seventeen) of this fort also

surrendered on condition of their lives being spared, and were sent prisoners after their comrades to Cork, and thence to England.

All this time the English ordnance, about twenty in number, were constantly playing on the town, while the Spaniards had only three or four pieces to return the fire, the vessels conveying their artillery having put back to Spain owing to stress of weather.

At the end of November the English sent a trumpeter to formally summon the garrison to surrender, but he returned with the answer that—

attempt was made after this to enter the town, but the cannon continued to play, reducing it in parts to ruins.

On 3rd December the missing portion of the Spanish fleet sailed into Castlehaven, about 30 miles westward, and landed some troops there, part of whom garrisoned the castles of Baltimore, Dunboy, and Castlehaven, and the remainder joined Red Hugh O'Donnell's army, and marched with them on Kinsale. These vessels also brought a quantity of artillery and ammunition, which they landed and placed along the harbour for its



KINSALE HARBOUR.

"Don Juan held that town, first for Christ, and then for the King of Spain, and so would defend it against all their enemies." Again the English artillery thundered against the devoted town, and by the 1st of December the besiegers were rewarded by the sight of the first breach in the walls. At once a party of 2,000 were sent forward to enter, protected by an incessant cannonade; but the garrison, sallying out, met them with such gallantry that, after an hour's fighting, the English retired to their camp without making even an attempt to storm the breach. No further

defence. The English, hearing of the new arrivals at Castlehaven, at once sent six of their fleet to attack them, and a fierce engagement ensued in the harbour, one of the Spanish vessels being sunk in shallow water. Having expended all his ammunition, the English commander then attempted to sail victoriously out of the harbour, but, to his intense chagrin, he found he was becalmed, and when a wind afterwards arose it was contrary, and only drove him closer to the shore. The Irish, seeing how matters stood, opened fire with all their cannon, which they plied incessantly

during the two days the English vessels were confined in the harbour, so that when they returned to Kinsale they were in a sorry plight, having lost several hundred of their men and received about four or five hundred hot during their brief sojourn.

On 21st December—soon after O'Donnell's arrival—Hugh O'Neill appeared with a large force on a hill called Belgooly, three miles north-east of the English camp, where he entrenched himself directly between the besiegers and Cork, thereby cutting off their supplies from headquarters. In that position he resolutely remained and refused to be drawn out of it by any ruse. The English commanders now became seriously alarmed—sickness and desertion were fast thinning their ranks, their supplies had been cut off, while those they had were nearly exhausted, and, worse than all, the dreaded victor of Bellanaboy lowered like a thundercloud over their camp, ready at any moment to burst forth in destruction upon them. Mountjoy began to consider the advisability of abandoning, or at least postponing, the siege, and retiring to Cork. But the Spaniards, cooped up in the town, became more and more impatient seeing that no active measures were being concerted, and Del Aguilha despatched several communications to the Irish commanders pressing them to take immediate action. O'Neill strongly resisted all proposals for active measures, knowing that time was the greatest enemy of the English, who were fast withering away by disease and famine. But the Spanish commander renewed his demands, strenuously urging the Irish to make a general attack upon the English camp on a certain night, while he was simultaneously to make a sortie from the town. When this proposal was discussed in council by the Irish it was still opposed by O'Neill, who earnestly entreated them to wait, as the English could not hold out much longer; but Red Hugh O'Donnell, with the ardour and impetuosity of youth, advocated an immediate attack, in which view he was supported by the majority of the Irish chiefs. Thereupon O'Neill, unwilling, acquiesced in the arrangement.

On the night of the 22nd December an Irish officer named MacMahon, whose son had served

as a page to the President in England, sent a messenger to the English camp to request the favour of a bottle of *aqua vitae* from the President. To this request Carew, for the sake of their old friendship, readily acceded, and sent him the bottle by the messenger.

Next day MacMahon sent another messenger with a letter thanking him for his kindness; but unfortunately for the Irish his gratitude did not end there, for the letter also warned him of the intended attack upon the English camp that night. The President was well repaid for his bottle of whiskey.

It is right to say that the sole authority for this incident is "*Pacata Hibernia*."

Messengers were now despatched hotfoot to all the outlying English posts, and the whole camp bustled with preparations. A letter from the Spanish commander which was intercepted confirmed the intelligence as to the attack that night.

A little before daybreak one of the English officers rode up in great haste to the Deputy, saying that he had seen great numbers of matches glimmering through the darkness [the guns then in use were matchlocks], and that he believed the Irish were marching upon them in force, and soon afterwards the scouts reported similarly. Thereupon the Deputy sent forward a body of picked men to oppose the passage of the Irish at a barricade across the road by which they were advancing. The main body of the English marched to a piece of ground to the west of the town, enclosed between a bog and a trench, and here, protected on the flanks by cannon, they awaited the onset of the enemy.

The Irish had originally set out in three divisions, but, the night being exceptionally dark and tempestuous, they lost their way, and the divisions became separated.

When O'Neill, stealthily advancing by a circuitous route in the uncertain light of dawn, crossed a low hill from which he could view the English camp he was confused and thunderstruck at the sight which met his gaze. Instead of taking the English unawares, as he thought, hill and dale bristled with serried masses of cavalry and infantry, spears and sabres gleamed in the dim twilight,

standards waved in the morning breeze, and the clank and din of arms mingled with the crash of the breakers on the shore. He retained his presence of mind, however, and ordered his men to stand well together, and then to retire slowly towards a ford at the foot of the hill; but all that he could do would not keep them steady, and after a time they broke up and retreated in considerable disorder. When Marshal Wingfield thought he observed some confusion in their ranks he and Lord Clanricarde charged them, but O'Neill's cavalry then came to the rescue, and drove back the English again and again, till reinforcements arrived, when the Irish at length gave way, still fighting stubbornly. The retreat became a rout, and the English cavalry poured upon the broken masses, killing them in hundreds. Another body of Irish and Spaniards under Sir Richard Tyrrell, then came up and made a brief stand, but, being unsupported, they were likewise broken and a great number killed. According to the English accounts, the Irish lost over 1,200 in this engagement, but the Irish, with some reason, make the number much less. The Earl of Clanricarde distinguished himself that

day, killing twenty Irish with his own hand, and crying out to "spare no rebel," for which service the Deputy knighted him in the field in the midst of the slain.

The English then held a thanksgiving, and fired off a *feu-de-joie* on the field of battle, hearing which the Spaniards sallied out of the town, imagining a battle was proceeding, but quickly returned on discovering their mistake.

Through some extraordinary misunderstanding the Spaniards failed to support the Irish attack by a simultaneous sortie from the town, as they had promised; and it was only when the engagement was quite over that they made their appearance as above described. Many prisoners were taken in this battle, and the English themselves admit that they were hanged on being brought into camp. ("*Pacata Hibernia*," page 421).

This disastrous overthrow of the Irish took place on the morning of 24th December, 1601, Old Style; it broke the power of O'Neill, who was then an old man; and O'Donnell died shortly afterwards, broken-hearted, in Spain, whither he had gone to invoke further aid for his unhappy countrymen.

## THE SACK OF DUNBOY AND THE RETREAT OF DONAL O'SULLIVAN BEARE.

**A**FTER the battle of Kinsale the Spanish commander capitulated, and his army marched out of the town with all the honours of war. Del Aguilha after this formed an intimate friendship with Sir George Carew, and openly expressed his contempt and dislike for the Irish, so that it is not surprising that their leaders believed him to be guilty of cowardice or treachery. Not only had he surrendered Kinsale, but he undertook also to deliver up the Castles of Baltimore, Dunboy, and Castlehaven, which, though garrisoned by Spanish troops, were the private property of the Irish chieftains. Baltimore and Castlehaven surrendered, according to Del Aguilha's agreement, but Donal O'Sullivan, Prince of Beare and Rantry, deemed the proposal to surrender his ancestral

castle as nothing short of treason, and determined to hold it against the English till help should come from Spain.

Accordingly he marched with a small force to the walls of the castle and demanded admittance, but he found it occupied by a Spanish garrison, who refused to give him possession of it, having heard of Del Aguilha's terms of capitulation. O'Sullivan, however, knowing the positions of the outworks, determined to try strategy, and one dark, tempestuous night he approached the castle and made an aperture in the outer wall through which he and his men effected an entrance, surprising and overpowering the Spaniards, some of whom remained in the castle and the rest left for Kinsale.

Del Aguilha was greatly irritated at the seizure of Dunboy in defiance of his capitulation, and he

offered to go himself and dispossess O'Sullivan, but this generous proposal was declined by the English commander.

Carew set out from Cork on 20th April, 1602, with an army of 3,000 men, while Wilmot, with another force of 1,000, marched from Kerry—both to attack Dunboy. Early in June this army of 4,000 sat down before the castle, defended by 143 resolute and determined men, who had only a few small cannon to oppose the well equipped park of artillery of the besiegers. The defence of the castle was entrusted to Richard MacGeoghegan, while O'Sullivan and Tyrrell were encamped at some distance inland. Before the siege commenced Carew sent a letter to the Spaniards who were among the garrison, attempting to bribe them into betraying the castle or injuring the ordnance and ammunition, but this proposition they rejected with scorn. He next sought to corrupt the Irish commander, and sent the Baron of Inchiquin to hold a parley with him, but in this he fared no better, for the brave MacGeoghegan was the soul of chivalry and honour.

Meanwhile a Spanish ship had arrived at Ardea, on Kenmare Bay, bringing arms and treasure, as well as the cheering intelligence that a fresh expedition was being organised in Spain, upon which O'Sullivan at once set out to meet the envoys who had landed there.

The English now began the bombardment of the castle, and after a few days attempted to storm it, but were vigorously repulsed after some loss on both sides. The batteries still continued to play incessantly, and in a few days more a breach was made; again a storming party sought to enter, but were repulsed as before, though they succeeded for a time in gaining the hall of the castle. By the 17th of June the castle was little more than a shattered ruin, and the garrison, seeing the hopelessness of further resistance, sent a messenger to the English camp to offer surrender provided they were allowed to depart with their arms. The offer was refused, the messenger at once hanged, and the order given for a fresh attack. The garrison disputed the entrance for a long time, but ultimately were forced to yield to the overwhelming numbers of

their assailants, who at length planted their standard in one of the towers.

New inspired by despair, however, the Irish fought with the most amazing fury—from turret to garret, from hall to stairs, from vault to vault, the dreadful struggle raged all day till the castle flowed with blood. Some thirty of the garrison attempted to escape by swimming across an arm of the sea, but they were killed, some before they could reach the water and the others by soldiers posted in boats for that purpose. At length the survivors took refuge in a cellar, entered by a narrow flight of stone stairs, in which part of the castle the gunpowder was stored. MacGeoghegan was now mortally wounded, and the command devolved on Thomas Taylor, who, when he entered the cellar, threatened to fire the powder and blow up castle and all unless their lives were promised to them.

Carew, however, refused this, and poured a fusillade of cannon balls into the cellar, upon which Taylor was forced by his comrades to desist from his threat, and surrender with them unconditionally. But MacGeoghegan, though dying, disdained to surrender; and when he saw his companions yielding and the English entering the place, by a superhuman effort he raised himself from the floor, where he had lain down to die, and, seizing a lighted torch, crawled over to fire the barrels of powder. Thereupon one of the English officers caught him just in time to prevent him effecting his desperate design, and held him in his arms till he was killed by some of the soldiers. So died the brave MacGeoghegan, a true hero and gallant soldier. Taylor and his companions, 73 in all, were then brought prisoners into the English camp. Fifty-eight of these brave fellows were hanged that day in the market-place of Castletown Beare, and the remaining fifteen were executed a few days later in Cork and elsewhere, so that not one of that little band survived after a heroic defence for eleven days against thirty times their number.

The defence of Dunboy is one of the most brilliant episodes of Irish history, and the lustre with which even unsympathetic annualists have in-

vested it is not tarnished by the absence of success or by the cruel fate of its gallant defenders. "*Pacata Hibernia*," says—"The whole number of the ward consisted of one hundred and forty-three selected fighting men, being the best choice of all their forces, of which no one escaped, but were either slain, executed, or buried in the ruins; and so obstinate and resolved a defence had not been seen within this kingdom."

On 22nd June, 1806, Carew blew up the remains of the castle with the gunpowder found in the cellars.

Of this once famous stronghold there now remains but two parallel walls, about 40 feet long, 10 feet high, 8 feet thick, and 36 feet asunder. There also remains a small portion of the wall at the western end, but of the eastern end wall every trace has disappeared. Some low, irregular grassy mounds, relics of the original outworks, extend around the ruins. On the north side the descent to the sea is nearly perpendicular, and on the east the ground facing the open bay slopes gradually to the water's edge.

The ruins are now surrounded by trees, giving the place an air of gloomy solitude, and the traveller often passes on his way, unconscious of his proximity to a spot of such tragic celebrity in Irish history.

After the destruction of his ancestral castle O'Sullivan Beare, now homeless, retired with his people to the mountains and woods of Glengarriff, where he kept the English forces at bay till Christmas time, when, forsaken by many of his officers, his position became desperate. Cooped up in a wild and desolate glen, the overhanging mountains covered with the winter snows, he was pressed hard by the English while encumbered by a crowd of his people unarmed, infirm, and many of them women and children. His fighting men were only a few hundred in number. After a hasty consultation with his few remaining officers, it was decided, as all other resources were exhausted, that their only hope was now to retreat northwards to Ulster, and fight their way through the hostile districts till they reached the territory of O'Ruarc, Prince of Breffni. The project was a desperate one, but to remain where they were was certain destruction.

Accordingly, on the 31st December, 1602, commenced this memorable and disastrous retreat, which has excited the admiration of historians of every country. O'Sullivan, when setting out, had 400 fighting men and 600 non-combatants, the latter mostly women, children, old people, and servants. He had been unable to make any special arrangements for supplying them with food, and was obliged to depend upon the chances of obtaining a sufficiency on the way, as he had plenty of money sent him from Spain. But he found the people afraid to sell him anything, as the President had sent word that anyone assisting them in any way would be treated as O'Sullivan's covert or open abettors. And any lands through which they passed were to be forfeited to the Crown.



BEREHAVEN.

With the imperfect resources at his disposal O'Sullivan found it utterly impossible to bring his sick and wounded with him, and accordingly he left them behind in his camp with a supply of food, hoping probably that they would be humanely dealt with. But he was mistaken, for in the words of Carew himself in *Pacata Hibernia* (page 659)—"*The next morning, being the 4th January, 1603, Sir Charles Wilmot, coming to seek the Enemy in their Campe, he found nothing but hurt and sicke men, whose pains and lives by the soldiers were both determined*" (ended).

The first day of their march O'Sullivan and his people reached Ballyvourney; from that they proceeded into the county Limerick, and made for the Glen of Aherlew, where they hoped for a brief rest in the fastnesses of the Galtees. On the way they were met by Viscount Barry, with a strong force, at Bellaghan ford, near Buttevant, where he hoped to stop their progress, but the

famished and desperate fugitives fought with such ferocity that they utterly routed their opponents. They then reached the vale of Aherlow, where they refreshed themselves with herbs and water, for they could get no other food. On they still advanced, their ranks thinning every day, still harassed and pursued by their ruthless foes, both English and Irish, and often reduced to the direst straits for want of food. On the ninth day of their toilsome journey they reached the Shannon at Lorrhae opposite Portumna, but they had no means of crossing, and meanwhile their assailants were hovering around like vultures, but afraid to attack. O'Sullivan ordered his men to entrench themselves, and gave directions to have a number of his horses killed; the flesh was kept as a luxury for the sick and wounded, and the skins were stretched over wooden frames so as to form light *curraghs* or boats. In these frail skiffs he transported his people across the river, repelling at the same time an attack by the Sheriff of Tipperary, who attempted to throw the women and children into the river.

The gaunt and attenuated band next reached Aughrim, where they were met by three times their number, under Captains Malby and Burke,

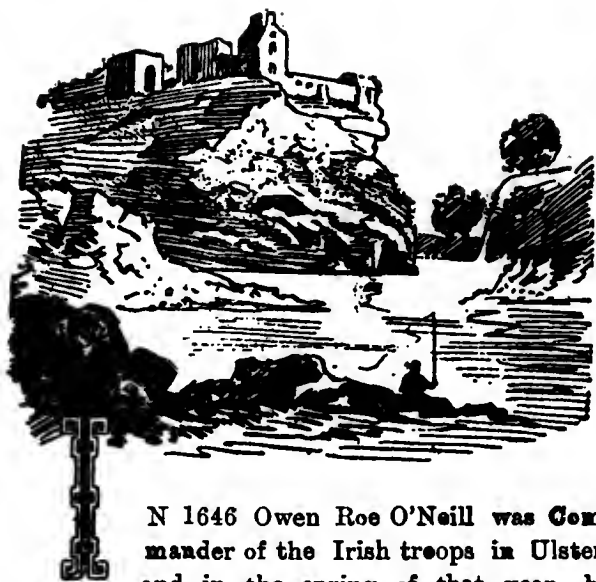
Lord Clanricarde's brother; but here they were again victorious—like starving wolves, maddened by hunger and suffering, they dashed upon their foes with resistless fury, scattering them like chaff before the wind, killing their leader and capturing their standards.

When they arrived in Roscommon, where they were kindly treated by the inhabitants, a guide presented himself and offered to conduct them to O'Ruarc's castle, about a day's march off. O'Sullivan, struck by his kindness, gave him two hundred pieces of gold, which he accepted with some hesitation, as he wished for no reward. After travelling for a whole night in the dark, they at length reached the summit of one of the Curliou mountains at sunrise, from which the guide pointed out in the distance the towers and battlements of O'Ruarc's castle rising above the trees. There being no further difficulties he then bade them farewell.

About noon O'Sullivan, with 35 survivors, reached the castle, where they received every possible kindness; some more straggled in next day in detached parties of two or three, but out of the thousand who had originally set out from Glengarriff, not one hundred reached the friendly portals of O'Ruarc, Prince of Breffni.



## BENBURB.



**I**N 1646 Owen Roe O'Neill was Commander of the Irish troops in Ulster, and in the spring of that year he travelled to Kilkenny to meet Rinuccini, the Pope's Nuncio, who brought him money and supplies. He then returned to the North to collect his forces, and in the month of May had assembled an army of 5,000 foot and 500 horse. Early in June, while drilling his troops at Cullanagh, in Cavan, news reached him that the whole of the English and Scotch garrisons in Ulster were to start immediately from their quarters, unite in one great army under Major-General Munroe, and advance by forced marches on Kilkenny to suppress the assembly of representatives there. The intended point of rendezvous was Glaslough, in the north of Monaghan. The main body, under Major-General Munroe himself, was to march there from Belfast, another detachment under his brother George was to proceed southwards from Coleraine, crossing the Blackwater at Benburb, and these two forces united were to be joined at Clones by the Donegal contingent.

To prevent the union of all these troops was now O'Neill's plan; there was no time for hesitation, he therefore resolved to throw all his strength into one swift and telling blow before the two first-mentioned forces could effect a junction. The 5th of June was the day appointed for the

meeting of the brothers Munroe at Glaslough. O'Neill was there by the 4th; thence he marched northward, crossed the Blackwater into Tyrone, and encamped at Benburb. He then sent a strong body of cavalry northwards to intercept George Munroe and beat him back upon his route, and he despatched another force to hold the ford at Portmore, lest either party should attempt to cross there.

Meanwhile, on same day (4th), the main body, under Major-General Munroe, had marched from Dromore, in Down, to Loughadryan, near Poyntzpass, on the borders of Armagh, about 20 miles from Benburb. Munroe had sent on in advance a small force of light cavalry to cross the Blackwater at Benburb and meet his brother's forces on their way to Glaslough. By accident this cavalry fell in with a few of the Irish scouts, and succeeded in making prisoner of one, from whom they elicited the startling intelligence that O'Neill was already entrenched at Benburb. Quickly retracing their steps they bore their prisoner back to their commander, who then learned that O'Neill lay right between him and his brother's forces. Although it was now late at night, Munroe roused his army from their slumbers and instantly despatched all his cavalry to Armagh, while the infantry and artillery struck their tents, broke up camp, and followed.

About eight o'clock on Friday morning, 5th of June, General Munroe and his army rode out from Armagh and made a reconnaissance of the enemy's position at Benburb, which he observed to be very strong, as they held both the bridge and the ford. He then held a council with his officers, at which it was decided that it would be imprudent to risk an engagement with the Irish in so advantageous a position, but that the best plan would be to march about six miles higher up the river to a ford at Caledon (then Kinard), cross the river there, and thus draw the enemy out of the strong position which they held.

Accordingly they marched along the river in view of the Irish and succeeded in crossing at

Caledon without meeting resistance; but when they had proceeded some distance at the other side towards Benburb their vanguard was attacked, and a smart engagement ensued between them and the advanced body of the Irish at the wooded pass of Ballykilgavin, three miles north of Caledon. The English ultimately forced this pass and drove the Irish out of it.

O'Neill meanwhile had abandoned his position on the river, and advanced westward to meet the English, taking up his position on a "scrogged high hill" called Kneeknacloy, about two miles west of Benburb and immediately westward of the confluence of the Oona and the Blackwater. His army then faced south-east, and his left wing was protected by the Oona river and his right by an impassable swamp. Munroe then came up and deployed his troops in battle line on another hillock about 500 yards to the southward, looking north-west, so that the two armies now stood face to face, with a shallow valley or hollow between them.

Hostilities commenced about 6 o'clock p.m. by skirmishing parties being thrown forward from the wings of both armies next the river, where the brushwood was dense and thick; in these encounters the English were mostly worsted and had to be continually supported by detachments from the main body. At one time, however, the Scotch musketeers seriously threatened the Irish left wing, but O'Neill sent forward a strong body of his famous light cavalry who at once dispersed and routed them. All this time the English field artillery was playing from the summit of the hill, but it appears to have been but badly served, as most of the shot passed harmlessly high, and only twice struck down files of the Irish.

An attempt was made by Lord Ards, one of the English commanders, to attack the Irish left wing by crossing the Oona with a body of cavalry, proceeding along its eastern bank, and charging the Irish across the shallows of the river. O'Neill, however, sent his son Henry to meet them with 600 foot, who completely routed them, Lord Ards and many of his officers being made prisoners.

The Irish were at length losing patience at being kept so long inactive and exposed to the

enemy's fire, and they repeatedly besought their command to lead them forward against the English. But O'Neill desired them to wait till some cavalry which he had sent away in the morning should return, and he continued the skirmishing, his real object being to wait till the brilliant sun of that June day went round sufficiently to be in the backs of the Irish, and shine full in the faces of their adversaries, so as to dazzle them. Then, and not till then, would he order a general advance. As the time approached he harangued his troops in inspiring language, exhorting them to fight valiantly for their faith and fatherland, and concluded by ordering them not to fire until they were within pike's length of the English.

At length when the proper moment came O'Neill gave the order. The Irish advanced in two divisions, the first or front composed of five columns with spaces between, and the second (the reserve) of four similarly spaced; but it was stated by one of the English officers (Sir R. Bellings) that the intervening spaces in both these divisions were too narrow, so that in the event of a reverse or of the reserve being brought forward neither could pass through the other without causing confusion. The English, strange to say, had no reserve. They formed all their troops into one body, and numbered 6,000 foot and 800 horse, while the Irish numbers were 5,000 and 500 respectively.

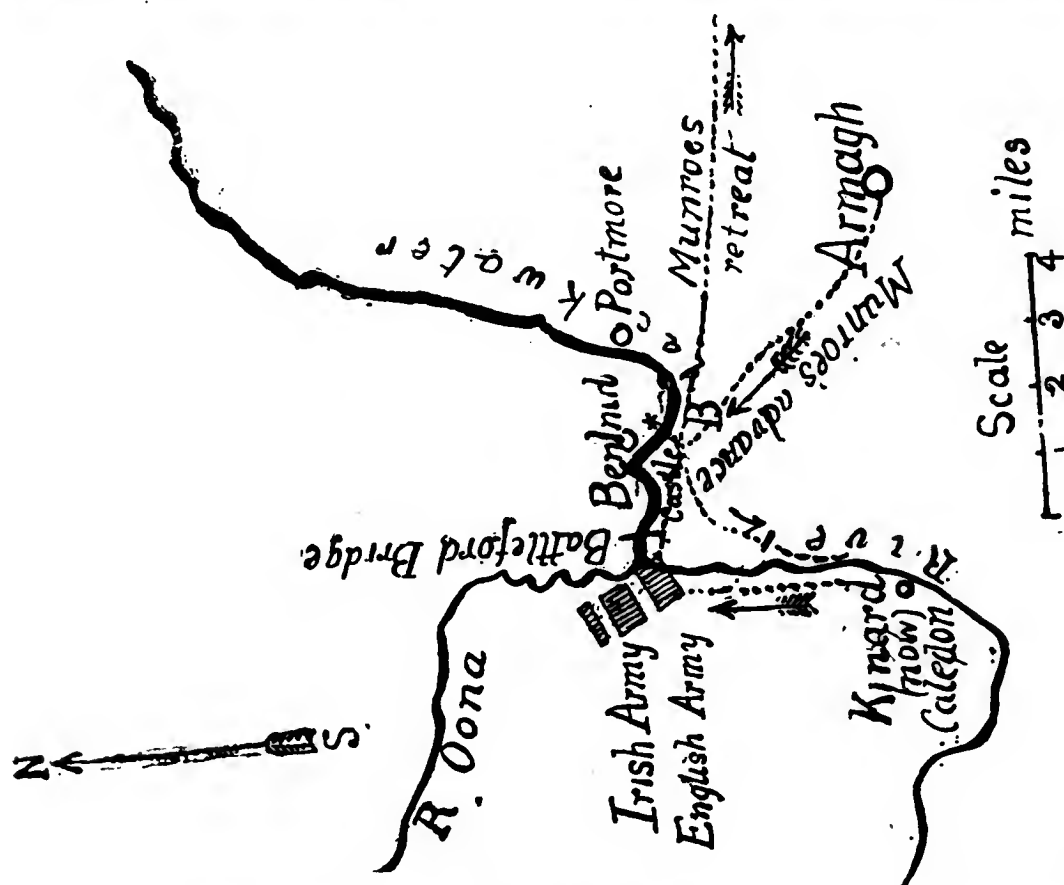
Munroe, seeing the Irish advancing to attack, sent forward a body of cavalry (mostly Irish, as he says in his despatch), but O'Neill's cavalry met and quickly turned them, drove them back upon the English infantry, and even pursued them through their ranks, causing considerable disorder. The Irish colonels dismounting from their horses, led their men to the charge—down the hillside to the bottom of the hollow, then up the opposite slope facing the cannon, and right up against the English lines till they were within pike's length of them.

One murderous volley crashes from the Irish musketeers, and then, obscured by the clouds of circling smoke, the opposing lines meet man to man and pike to pike. The English and Scottish officers stood their ground manfully, and would not give way till forced by the Irish pikemen, but

the rank and file of the English fought badly, and, falling back, in a few moments their position was carried by the Irish.

The English were in bad condition for receiving a charge; their ranks had already been broken by their own retreating cavalry; they were wearied by their long march, and, as they say themselves, "They did not expect to be faced by Ulstermen, much less to be fought with" (*The British Officer*). Besides, the sun, now setting, was glaring level in

following as before in pursuit. This mishap precipitated the result. O'Neill now gave the order "Redouble your blows and the battle is won." (*Aphorismicall Discoverie*). A total rout followed, and the English army broke up in tumultuous disorder. The cavalry forded the Blackwater, and most of them escaped in safety, but of the infantry great numbers were killed and many others were drowned in attempting to cross the river where it was not fordable. (*Carte's Ormonde*



THE BATTLE OF BENBURB.

their faces, so that between smoke and sunshine they could with difficulty distinguish their opponents till close at hand.

The struggle was a brief one, and the fate of battle was decided in a few moments. Munroe, seeing the Irish prevailing, despatched a second squadron of cavalry against them, but only with the same result as before. They were again met by the Irish cavalry, hurled back in disorder upon the infantry, breaking their ranks, the Irish

and Munroe's despatch). Only one regiment, that of Sir J Montgomery, retired in order; all the others broke from their ranks.

The English loss was about 2,000 (*The Brit. Officer*), though many authorities make it more than that. The loss on the Irish side was remarkably small, not more than 150 at the utmost; this may be partly accounted for by the clumsy handling of the English artillery.

The Irish captured nearly all the artillery,

arms, and standards of the English, besides a great quantity of tents, baggage, and supplies. Munroe precipitately fled from the battlefield without his cloak or wig (*Carte's Ormonde*), and his brother, with the Coleraine contingent, seeing the fight raging from afar, wisely retired and succeeded in escaping without the loss of a single man.

According to the English accounts (*The Brit. Officer*) the Irish pikes were much better than the English ones, being a foot or two longer, 4-sided, and sharp, while the others were broad-headed and blunt. The same authority says that the English and Scottish soldiers, when they found their pikes too heavy for them, were in the habit of cutting off a foot or two to lighten them.



SIGNATURE OF OWEN ROE O'NEILL (DON EUGENIO O'NEILL).

From a facsimile letter in "*Contemporary History of Events in Ireland.*"

The Irish took many prisoners, and gave quarter to all who submitted, according to *The British Officer*. The day after the battle O'Neill buried the bodies of several of the English and Scottish officers, and a tablet in Benburb churchyard still records the last resting-place of Captain James Hamilton, who "was slain in his Majesty's service against the Irish rebels, the 5th day of June, 1646."

The hill which formed the centre of the Irish position has been a large grazing field for a long time past, and the hillock, or rising ground, occu-

pied by the English is now covered by small fields and meadows, and is partly under tillage.

A quantity of State correspondence relative to this battle is published in "*The Aphorismicall Discovery*" and "*Contemporary History of Affairs in Ireland*," edited by J T Gilbert, Esq, M R I A; two letters in particular are very detailed—Munroe's despatch, and an extract from "The History of the Warr in Ireland from 1641 to 1653," by a British Officer of Sir John Clotworthy's regiment. There is also a very detailed account of the battle in "*Transactions of the Ossory Archæological Society*," by "An Ulster Archæologist."

At midnight I gazed on the moonless skies ;  
There glistened, 'mid other star blazonries,  
A sword all stars; then Heaven, I knew,  
Had holy work for a sword to do.  
Be true, ye clansmen of Nial ! Be true !

At morning I looked, as the sun uprose,  
On the fair hills of Antrim, late white with snows  
Was it morning only that dyed them red ?  
Martyred hests, methought, had bled  
On their sanguine ridges for years not few !  
Ye clansmen of Conn this day be true !

There is felt once more on the earth  
The step of a kingly man :  
Like a dead man, hidden, he lay from his birth  
Exiled from his country and clan.

This day his standard he flingeth forth ;  
He tramples the bond and ban :  
Let them look in his face who usurped his hearth ;  
Let them vanquish him they who can !

Owen Roe, our own O'Neill !  
He treads once more our land !  
The sword in his hand is of Spanish steel !  
But the hand is an Irish hand !

AUBREY DE VERE.



## RATHMINES AND CULLENSWOOD.

Rathgar, upon thy broken wall,  
 Now grows the lusmore rank and tall—  
 Wild grass upon thy heartstone springs,  
 And ivy round thy turret clings;  
 The night-owls through thy arches sweep,  
 Thy moat dried up, thy towers a heap,  
 Blackened, and charr'd and desolate—  
 The traveller marvels at thy fate !  
 —"THE MONKS OF KILCREA."



FIFTY or sixty years ago Rathmines consisted of a cluster of houses in the neighbourhood of "The Chains," with a few detached residences scattered sparsely around through the open country; to-day it is a large and populous suburb of the metropolis, of which it almost forms a part, while scarcely a vestige remains of its once rural character. The place known as "The Chains," situated at the upper end of Rathmines-road, though now in a dilapidated and unsanitary condition, originally formed the nucleus of the little hamlet of Rathmines, through which the Swan River, now entirely closed in, flowed.

In ancient times the whole district lying south of Dublin was called *Cualann*, corrupted into Cullen; that portion of it between Rathmines and Donnybrook, and extending out to the Dodder, was known as the Wood of Cullen, or Cullenswood, from a wood which then covered a considerable part of it. "Cullen" is, therefore, in this instance, a topographical and not a personal name; it also occurs in the name Glencullen, a gorge in the Dublin Mountains between Glendoe and Tibbraden. After the Anglo-Norman invasion numbers of the Irish were driven out of Dublin, and took refuge in the fastnesses of the Dublin and Wicklow mountains, from which, in company with the Wicklow clans, they made warlike incursions upon the plains beneath, ravaging the country and keeping the English settlers in continual terror.

About 1200 A.D. King Jahn founded a colony of

Bristol settlers in Dublin, to whom, regardless of the rights of the original inhabitants, he capriciously granted a charter of the city similar to that of Bristol. These settlers were accustomed to meet on the plains of Cullenswood on holidays and festivals to indulge in the games and sports of the period. The fierce septs of the mountains viewed these new usurpers of their homes with deep feelings of hostility and resentment, and eagerly watched for an opportunity of wreaking vengeance upon them. On Easter Monday, 1209, afterwards known as Black Monday, a large number of these settlers went out to the plain of Cullenswood, according to custom. While they were amusing themselves there a number of the Wicklow clans—the O'Byrnes and O'Tooles—with the dispossessed Irish from the neighbouring mountains, who were concealed in an ambuscade in the wood, fell upon them with great fury, and slew 500 of them. The following quaint account of this sanguinary affray is given by Stanyhurst, a writer of the 16th century:—

"The citizens having over great affiance in the multitude of the people, and so consequently being somewhat retchless (reckless) in heading the mountain enemy that lurched under their noses, were wont to roam and royle in elusters, sometimes three or four miles from towne. The Irish enemy, espying that the citizens were accustomed to fetch such odd vagaries on holydays, and having an inckling withal by the means of some claterfert (traitor) or other that a company of them would range abroad on Monday in the Easter week, towards the woode of Cullen, they lay in a state very well appointed, and layde in

sundry places for their coming. The citizens, rather minding the pleasure they should presently enjoy than forecasting the hurt that might ensue, flockt unarmed from the citie to the woode. Where, being intercepted by their lying in ambush, were, to the number of five hundred, miserably slayne. The citizens, deeming that unluckie tyme to be a cross or dismall day, gave it the appellation of Black Monday. The citie being soon after peopled by a fresh supply of Bristolians, to dare the Irish enemy, agreed to banquet yearly in that place. For the mayor and the sherifes, with the citizens, repayre to the Woode of Cullen, in which place the mayor bestoweth a costly dinner within a meate or roundell, and both the sherifes within another, where they are so well guarded by the youth of the citie, as the mountain enemy dareth not attempt to snatch so much as a pastye crust from thence."

The rather meagre details of this incident that have been handed down to us represent that the settlers were unarmed and unprepared for this attack, and that it was therefore a mere massacre. It should be recollected, however, that there is no contemporary account, and that these details, such as we have them, rest exclusively upon the testimony of chroniclers who wrote upon hearsay evidence some hundreds of years after the event occurred. The accounts must therefore be received with reserve.

Dublin was shortly after replenished by a fresh colony of settlers from Bristol, who for hundreds of year safterwards marched out every Easter Monday to the scene of the disaster, fully armed, and headed by a black flag, and formally challenged the Irish septs to combat. This strange ceremonial was observed up to a comparatively recent period.

The same chroniclers relate that in 1316, David O'Toole, an Irish chieftain, laid a similar ambush, but the citizens, sallying out suddenly from the city with their black flag, defeated the ambush, and routed their assailants, killing a number of them, and pursued the remainder for miles into the mountains.

The district of Rathmines and Cullenswood, lying south of Dublin, and directly between the

city and the mountains, was the scene of continual conflicts between the early English settlers and the native Irish. Tradition still points out the scene of the memorable disaster of 1209, and the place is to this day known as "The Bloody Fields." Its exact position is shown on the 6-inch Ordnance Survey Map in Thom's Directory. The name of "Cullenswood" still remains, though the "wood" has long since disappeared. It is applied to the district lying immediately south of Ramelagh. I have been unable to discover anything as to the site of the original "wood," which probably consisted more of brushwood and heather than trees. The Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway now passes through "The Bloody Fields;" a considerable portion is occupied by Palmerston Road and its offshoots, and the remainder is becoming gradually built over. In sinking the foundations for the houses there considerable quantities of human bones have been discovered from time to time, accompanied in some instances by arms and coins.

It is a remarkable fact that these fields remained till recently an open country space long after the surrounding suburbs of Rathgar, Clonskeagh, and Donnybrook were built on. A glance at the map will show this, the place appearing hemmed in on all sides by houses and private grounds. Whether the evil traditions of old attaching to the locality had any deterrent effect upon building enterprise it is impossible to say, but the fact remains that it is only within the past few years that it has begun to be generally built on. It is now a growing suburb of modern red brick houses and a tram line runs through it; in a few years more it will be entirely built over, and of the "Bloody Fields" will survive but the name—a memento of this tragic episode of the early English settlement.

During the Civil War between Charles I. and his Parliament, Lord Ormonde, the Viceroy, was entrusted with command of the Royalist troops in Ireland. In 1649 he determined to besiege Dublin, which was occupied by the Republican forces under Colonel Jones, and with this object he encamped about the middle of July south of the

city at Rathmines. Another portion of his army took up a position at the north side of the city under command of Lord Dillon. From Rathmines Ormonde intended to carry works and entrenchments down towards the Liffey, which would enable him to command the mouth of the river and thus cut off the enemy's supplies by sea. In this project, however, he was unsuccessful, and the garrison was strengthened by successive reinforcements of infantry and cavalry, as well as considerable quantities of supplies and ammunition.

would in a short time deprive them of cavalry, and in a great measure restrict their operations. But it was fated to be otherwise, as the sequel will show.

In the district known as Baginbally, and (according to Mr. Wakeman), exactly on the site of 44 Upper Baginbally-street, there then stood the stout old castle of Baginbally. This castle Ormonde considered the fittest place to be fortified and made the headquarters for offensive operations against the city. After it had been viewed and examined by three of his principal



BAGINBALLY CASTLE, 1791 (From *Gosse's Antiquities*).  
Site now occupied by 44 Upper Baginbally-street.

On 1st August Ormonde held a council of war, as the army appeared too much exposed in camp at Rathmines. Ormonde himself was disposed to take up quarters at Drimnagh, near Crumlin, where he could communicate with the rest of his army at the north side of the Liffey. This was opposed by most of his officers, who thought such a movement would seem too like a retreat, and it was accordingly decided to take up a position so close to the outworks of Dublin as would prevent the beleaguered forces within from grazing their horses on the pasture lands which then lay between the city walls and the camp. This, it was thought,

officers, who concurred in his views, Ormonde directed General Purcell to march to the castle with 1,500 men and materials and ammunition to fortify it. This was on the evening of the 1st of August.

At daybreak next morning Ormonde went himself to the castle to see how the work was progressing. To his annoyance he found it very little advanced, and on asking for an explanation Purcell stated that he had been misled by his Irish guide, that he had lost his way, and that he in consequence did not arrive there till an hour before daybreak. This explanation Ormonde

naturally enough did not consider very satisfactory, as the total distance was only one mile, and Purcell had therefore spent the whole night marching this distance. The castle being, however, in a naturally strong position, Ormonde considered that it would not take long to fortify, and he accordingly deputed the work to Sir William Vaughan, with directions to have it done as hastily as possible.

Observing some bodies of the enemy hovering about, he drew his whole army over towards the castle, with the right wing covering the fortifying party, and planted his artillery on an eminence called Gallows Hill, near where Mount-street is now, between the castle and the city walls. Having then assigned different duties to his several officers, Ormonde retired to his tent about eight o'clock a.m. to take some rest, as he had been up all night writing despatches. He does not appear to have anticipated any immediate attack, and was apparently satisfied that he had made ample preparation for any contingency.

About nine o'clock, however, Colonel Jones sallied out from the city with 1,200 horse and 4,000 foot, intending only to make a reconnaissance, but, seeing the occasion favourable for an attack, and that Ormonde's troops were badly disposed, he made a detour to the castle, and about 10 o'clock suddenly and unexpectedly attacked the right wing, which, after some brief fighting, broke up in disorder and fled from the field, bringing the fortifying party with them. Ormonde, awakened by the shots, rushed from his tent just in time to find his right wing in full retreat. His officers then attempted to rally the main body and left wing, which for a time made some show of fighting, but in vain; the Republican troops gained field after field until they came up to where the artillery was planted. Here Ormonde, surrounded by his personal staff, made a last attempt at resistance; but, being attacked front and rere, they had to fly from the field leaving their artillery, ammunition, and treasure in the hands of the enemy.

In this disastrous engagement Sir William Vaughan and many other officers of distinction were slain. A panic seems to have seized Ormonde's army on the occasion—whole regi-

ments ran away, throwing down their arms and begging for quarter. A body of 2,500 infantry, finding themselves deserted by the cavalry, surrendered in a body on being promised quarter, but numbers of them were butchered when brought within the city walls. It was stated by the Republicans that in this battle there were three thousand killed and as many taken prisoners, and some authorities place the number even still higher.

The victory was complete and decisive—it broke up the Royalist army and raised the siege of Dublin. Ormonde's undoubtedly bad generalship on the occasion involved him in great discredit at the Court of England, and in reply to the charges brought against him he furnished a long explanation, which, however, seems lame and unsatisfactory. His reputation as a military leader appears to have been shattered, and he never afterwards made any effective stand against the Republican forces. He deemed it advisable shortly afterwards to retire to the safe seclusion of the Continent, where he remained till the Restoration.

Shortly after the battle, Baginbun Castle was again seized by a small body of Royalists, who held out for some days against Cromwell, but he ultimately took it by storm, and left it a shattered ruin. In this condition it remained till the beginning of the present century, when it was ruthlessly demolished to make room for a terrace of dwellinghouses in Upper Baginbun-street, which have since risen over its ruins. There is a fine drawing of this old castle, dated 1791, in "*Grose's Antiquities of Ireland*," in which it is represented as quite a rural scene in the midst of fields and trees, with the mountains in the background, and would considerably exercise the imagination of a modern inhabitant of the neighbourhood. The accompanying illustration is copied from *Grose*.

The original Castle of Baginbun was built about the twelfth century, but the latest structure, a square tower, was erected about the time of James I. or Elizabeth. There are, I believe, some old people still alive who remember its ruins. Some interesting local details concerning it are given in Mr. Wakeman's first series of "*Old Dublin*."

For a long time after the great battle there, it was the resort of freebooters, desperadoes, and highwaymen, and was considered a dangerous place to pass after dusk.

"Lewis's Dublin Guide," published in 1787, gives the following notice of this interesting ruin—"The upper part, which threatened immediate destruction to all who should approach its base, was in 1785 taken down; and what small fragment of the tower was left was entirely filled up with stones, earth, and other matters, and the whole closed at the top; so that it is now almost as solid and compact as a rock, and may bid defiance to the shocks of time."

The office of Governor of Baginbun Castle, though a sinecure from the time of the battle, was filled from time to time, and a salary paid till the Union, when it, with a number of similar appointments, was abolished, and a commutation

of the salary paid to Sir John (afterwards Lord) De Blaquiere.

In this battle the fighting extended all along the south side of the city, from Rathmines down to the sea and back as far as the banks of the River Dodder. After the battle a large number of Lord Inchiquin's soldiers from Ormonde's army, took refuge in the groves and thickets of Rathgar with which the place then abounded, and there concealed themselves till after some parleying they obtained conditions for their lives. Next day the greater number of them took up arms in the Republican service, which would indicate that their political views were of an accommodating kind. It may be observed that even to this day Rathgar bears traces of the character which then distinguished it, it being one of the most wooded suburbs of the city.

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## THE SIEGE OF DERRY.

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IN 1688, before affairs in England had taken a very pronounced turn against King James, Ireland was in a most disturbed condition. Ulster in particular was greatly disorganised. Mysterious rumours were afloat as to risings and murders, and Protestants and Catholics alike lived in constant apprehension of being massacred, each by the other. Early in December many anonymous letters were received by prominent persons in the North warning them of an intended massacre of Protestants at an early date. On the 7th December two communications were received by the Town Council of Derry, one intimating that the massacre was fixed for the 9th, and the other a letter from one of the old governors of the city, stating that Lord Antrim's regiment, mostly Catholics, was only twelve miles off, and calling upon the inhabitants to shut their gates against them.

It is scarcely necessary to say that the projected massacre was but a myth like the others, and originated in the fevered and excited imaginations of the people. It is not seriously referred to by any historian.

While deliberations were proceeding as to the course to be adopted, news was brought to the assembled multitude that Lord Antrim's regiment was now within two miles of the walls. The people were divided in their councils—some were too terrified to give any opinion, many discredited the whole story; but the great majority of the humbler classes clamoured vociferously for the gates to be shut against the forces of the King. The obnoxious regiment was by this time in view at the far side of the river and was making preparations to cross, but while the town council and the more responsible inhabitants still wavered, the young apprentices of the town took the matter in their own hands. Thirteen of them suddenly drew their swords, seized the city keys from the guard, and then, rushing down to the ferry which Antrim's men were approaching, they raised the drawbridge,

and, returning, locked all the gates of the town. Such was the first overt act of rebellion against King James II.

The troops, which were intended as a garrison for the town, having formally demanded and been refused admission, withdrew with their commander to Coleraine. From all sides now the English settlers, terrified, thronged to Derry as a refuge, and night and day strenuous efforts were made to strengthen the fortifications around the town.

On Christmas Day, 1688, King James landed on the French shores, a fugitive from his kingdom and his subjects. In March, 1689, he embarked at Brest for Ireland with a naval and military force, as well as a considerable quantity of supplies and money provided by King Louis of France. He landed at Kinsale about the middle of March.

On 9th April, after a toilsome march, James and his army appeared before Derry, accompanied by his son, the Duke of Berwick, and General De Rosen, a French officer. Lundy, the governor of the town, advocated submission, and forbade all preparations for resistance, but on the appearance of King James's army, a tumultuous meeting of the inhabitants was held, and Lundy was openly accused of cowardice and treachery, for it was strongly suspected that he had opened secret negotiations with the Jacobites. The command of the town now devolved upon two of the principal officers, assisted by Rev George Walker, rector of Donoughmore, who by his exhortations and ceaseless energy greatly encouraged the garrison. Lundy found it necessary to conceal himself from the fury of the townspeople till the ensuing night, when he escaped from the town in disguise.

When James arrived he entered into negotiations with the townspeople touching an honourable surrender. Shortly afterwards he approached the walls accompanied by his staff, with the object of conferring with the garrison, but when he was within about one hundred yards, a cannon from the nearest bastion was without warning treacherously fired at him, killing one of his officers by his side. He then, seeing the hopelessness of a compromise, at once withdrew, and

soon after returned to Dublin in company with De Rosen, leaving his army at Derry in command of General Hamilton.

Meanwhile dissensions raged within the walls. The pusillanimous town council were still advocating a surrender, and had even prepared and signed a document to that effect, when Colonel Murray and the great bulk of the humbler citizens took armed possession of the town and superseded the municipal authorities. All negotiations for a surrender were summarily terminated. The peace party met no more, and Derry by an overwhelming majority resolved on resistance.

On 21st April a prolonged roar of cannon proclaimed that the siege had begun. The Jacobites had completely surrounded the town so far as land was concerned; but the approach by water was unprotected, because they had no ships of war and they had to substitute a boom across the river below the town instead. This boom was composed of great cables and pieces of timber bound together, drawn tightly across the river, and securely fastened to massive stakes or pillars on either bank. It was thus impossible for an vessel to pass up or down the river without bursting through this formidable obstacle.

During the first day the besieged made a sudden sally and attacked an isolated detachment of Jacobite infantry under Hamilton who were marching round to the other side of the town. A fierce combat ensued. The sortie was led by the gallant Murray, who charged at the head of the cavalry, but they were met by Berwick and his cavalry with such effect that the Williamite ranks were broken, and they had to fly for refuge to the town. Murray's horse was killed under him, and he himself escaped with difficulty. But although this sally was thus repulsed, the Jacobites suffered the greater loss, and had two of their principal officers killed.

On the 25th of April the garrison made another sally on a body of 500 Jacobites, whom they fought in a desultory way from 10 o'clock in the morning till 7 o'clock in the evening, when the Jacobites, nearly overcome by force of numbers, were relieved by reinforcements from the main body, and the Williamites were forced to retire.

The loss on both sides in this action was inconsiderable, but the Jacobites lost De Pusignan, a distinguished French officer.

Early in May, during a dark night, the Jacobites took possession of an eminence, called Windmill-hill, overlooking the town on the south-west, intending to plant some artillery there; but when morning came and the garrison saw their besiegers in so menacing a position, they sallied out in force, and after a desperate hand-to-hand engagement, completely routed them, killing their gallant commander, Ramsey. The Williamites then constructed trenches and outworks here, which they held during the remainder of the siege. In this encounter, as indeed in all others, the Derry men showed their vast superiority as marksmen over their opponents, every shot, both of musket and cannon, telling with deadly effect.

Many of the Jacobites who had been captured in the several conflicts were now prisoners within the town, and these the garrison, to their credit be it said, treated with the greatest humanity, even allowing surgeons and supplies of provisions to be sent to them.

On 4th June a desperate attempt was made to storm and enter the town. The attack, which was made by three detachments of horse and two of foot, was concentrated on that part of the outworks adjoining Windmill-hill. The Jacobites advanced with the utmost gallantry, cheering as they approached and holding boughs before them. The Williamites met them with a steady fire in three lines, each line retiring to the rear to load as they fired. This checked the advance of the storming party, who, after long and hard fighting, lost several hundred by the cool and deadly fire from behind the entrenchments, and had many prisoners taken as well, upon which they desisted from the attempt on the town. In this engagement the defenders were ably assisted by the women of Derry, who, regardless of danger, were to be seen in the thick of the fight, serving out refreshments and ammunition to the men, and even attacking the besiegers with showers of stones.

Now, however, the brave garrison were confronted by a new and more deadly foe, against which no valour is proof. Grim famine stared

them in the face, and had already made its mark in their anxious features. Their last loaf was gone and they were forced to stave off the cravings of hunger with horseflesh, tallow, and various kinds of refuse.

On 13th June the watchmen on the church tower discerned out at sea thirty ships, displaying friendly signals and ensigns, about to enter Lough Foyle. This news caused great joy, and the garrison anxiously watched the progress of the fleet. A messenger at length swam, at dusk, from one of the ships, and announced that Major-General Kirke had arrived, conveying a great quantity of provisions and arms for the famished and miserable garrison. Their hearts were gladdened with the hope of relief, but it was destined to be dashed to the ground, and to prove but a very draught of Tantalus. Kirke became faint-hearted when he saw the boom and the threatening aspect of the Jacobite forts guarding the passage of the river. He accordingly lay to, and for *forty-six days* this great fleet of thirty sail rode securely at anchor in Lough Foyle, while the brave fellows inside the town starved and fought in rags, hoping against hope, day after day, that Kirke would make some effort to relieve them!

Meanwhile the garrison were reduced to dreadful straits. Meat and corn had entirely disappeared. Dead dogs, horses, cats, foul grease, and tallow had taken their place, and even of these there was a scant supply. The following tariff of prices during the siege will give some idea of the privations suffered by the garrison and townspeople—Horseflesh, 1s 8d per lb; quarter of dog fattened by eating dead bodies, 5s 6d; dog's head, 2s 6d; cat, 4s 6d; rat fattened by human flesh, 1s; mouse, 6d; greaves, 1s per lb; tallow, 4s per lb; salted hides, 1s per lb; quart of horse-blood, 1s; handful of sea-wrack, 2d; handful of chicken-weed, 1d.

Several attempts were made to communicate with the sluggish commander of the fleet, but though they failed, through the messengers being intercepted, he could not but be aware of their sufferings, for they never ceased to signal to him for relief. It seems strange that he should not have tried the simple expedient of firing on the boom. A dozen well-directed shots at 40 or 50

yards could hardly have failed to break it, and it was well above the water at low tide.

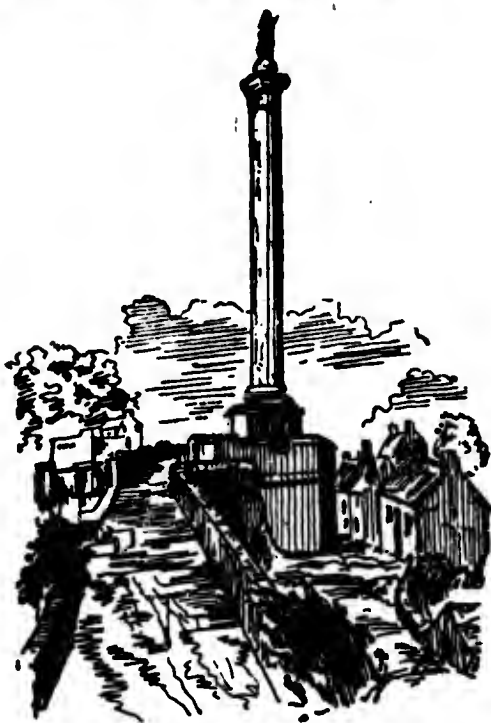
The last attempt to storm the town was made on the 30th June, but it was repulsed like the others. Then it was that Marshal de Resen, the French commander, committed an act of cruel barbarity for which there is no parallel since the siege of Calais by Edward III. He collected all the Williamite inhabitants—men, women, and children—from the surrounding country and drove them to the gates of the town, leaving them there to starve, in hope that the garrison would admit them, and thus still faster consume their store of provisions. This piece of savagery, however, aroused such indignation among the Irish officers and men of the Jacobite army that De Resen, afraid of taking so extreme a step entirely on his own responsibility, wrote to King James in Dublin apprising him of it. James at once replied forbidding it, and ordering the other generals not to execute such a command, but before this reply was received numbers of these unfortunate people were already congregated at the gates in the utmost misery.

The garrison refused to admit them, and now adopted retaliatory measures. On the bastion facing the hostile camps they erected a huge gallows, and brought forth the Jacobite prisoners, whom, up to this, they had treated kindly. Ostentatious preparations were then made to hang them unless De Resen desisted, and they were permitted to write to him to that effect. This stern attitude of the garrison, together with James's letter, had the desired result, and the wretched crowd were permitted to depart in safety.

About the middle of July negotiations were opened for a surrender, but they came to nothing, for the commissioners disagreed about the date. The active siege now ceased, and was turned into a blockade. It had nearly sufficed. An ominous silence had settled down upon the ancient town—the shadow of approaching death. The gaunt and starving garrison still manned the walls, but they now looked like living skeletons. They had only a dozen horses left and a pint of meal to each man.

Meanwhile Kirke had received peremptory orders from England to risk everything and force

the boom. The unhappy garrison knew nothing of this, however, and had almost abandoned all hope of relief—but relief was at hand.



WALKER'S MONUMENT, DERRY.

The shades of evening were closing into night on the 28th July, when a flash was seen in the direction of Culmore Fort, and a loud report reverberated along the placid waters of the Foyle. There was a rush to the battlements, and then, as a thousand lean and wasted forms wistfully peered through the darkening gloom, another flash bade them listen for a second report, which was followed by a rapid succession of others, the fitful light of the flashes revealing the forms of three ships sailing up the Foyle amid a continuous fire from the Jacobite forts along the river. Kirke had at last resolved to attack the boom. The spectators were breathless with anxiety and excitement. Onward sailed the ships with every inch of canvas spread to the wind, through a raking fire of shot and shell. At length the foremost struck with full force against the boom—there was a loud crash, the vessel recoiled from the shock and grounded, but the boom was broken. The other two ships passed through, and a broadside from

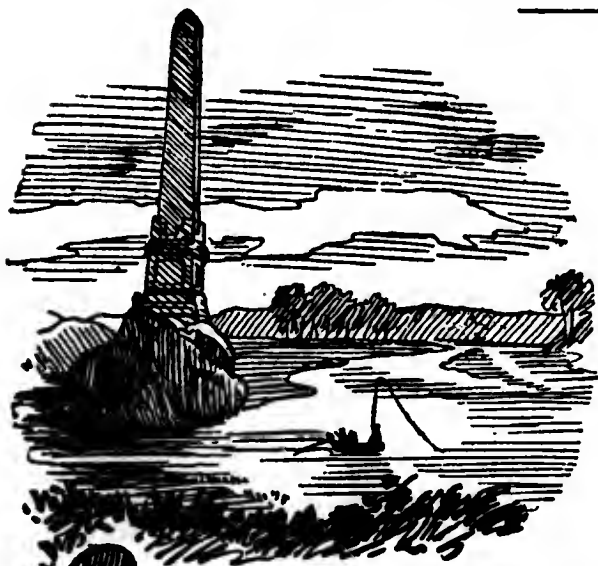
the third released it in time to follow; the three then sailed up to the town and landed all their stores and provisions. The siege was ended, and next morning when the wasted defenders looked from their ramparts they saw an empty camp—the Jacobites had gone and the gallant city was free.

The accounts as to the numbers and losses in this famous siege are very conflicting, but according to the best authorities the besiegers were about 6,000 or 7,000 strong, while the besieged were between 10,000 and 12,000, exclusive of women

and children. Except in occasional fighting outside the walls, however, this numerical superiority was of little advantage to the besieged on account of the limited space in which they were enclosed and the scarcity of provisions. It is estimated that each side lost about half its number.

Many of the cannon and other interesting relics of this famous siege are still to be seen in the town, and in 1828 a lofty pillar surmounted by a statue of Walker was erected on the site of one of the western bastions to the memory of that remarkable man.

## THE BATTLE OF THE BOYNE.



**C**RIPPLED by the relief of Derry and the disastrous defeat at Newtown-Butler, the Jacobites retired southward from Ulster, and King James, having sent his army into winter quarters, returned to Dublin in November, where he remained till the following June.

William of Orange landed at Carrickfergus on 14th June, 1690, accompanied by a number of distinguished officers and noblemen, and on the same day he arrived in Belfast. He took immediate measures to collect and organise his scattered army and put a stop to pillaging and other misconduct of which he had heard while in England.

He also issued orders that his soldiers should pay for everything they got from the people.

On 24th June, everything being in readiness, he marched southward with all his troops, and on the 27th he reached Dundalk, which had been occupied by the Jacobite forces, but was evacuated by them on his approach. James then retired to Ardee, and on the 28th he crossed the Boyne, and encamped on its southern bank, about three miles above Drogheda. Here he resolved to wait for his rival and try the issue of battle.

William, quickly following, at early morning on the 30th, he reached the Boyne; and from the hill of Tullyesker, about two miles north of Drogheda, he surveyed the picturesque surrounding country in all the glory of summer. In front was the Jacobite camp, nearer the ancient town of Drogheda, and away to the right lay the devious glittering course of the Boyne. Accompanied by some of his officers, he then rode down to the picturesque gorge now known as King William's Glen, from which he made careful observation of the Jacobite position, and determined his point of attack, while his army advanced in the rear close to the river.

He was so charmed with the beauty of the scene, enhanced by the lovely morning, that he rode a couple of hundred yards along the river and sat down upon some rising ground opposite the Jacobite camp, where he called for his break-

fast to be served him *al fresco*. Meanwhile a party of the Jacobite horse quietly descended from the hill of Donore on the far side and entered a ploughed field opposite the spot where William and his suite were breakfasting. After remaining there some time they returned, apparently without having accomplished anything; but nevertheless they had, unnoticed, unlimbered two field pieces and concealed them under a hedge, leaving a few expert gunners in charge.

About half an hour afterwards William rose to remount his horse, when a loud report from one of the pieces resounded along the river banks, the ball killing a man and a couple of horses a short distance behind him. Before he could recover from his surprise a second was fired, and the ball, ricochetting from the river bank, struck him on the right shoulder, inflicting a harmless lacerated wound. A few inches closer would have abruptly ended the war. William fell forward on his horse's neck, a loud shout of exultation was raised from the Jacobite camp, and messengers were even despatched to Paris and Dublin with the news that he was killed. In a few moments, however, he was sufficiently recovered to sit upright again and answer the many inquiries as to the wound, which was then dressed by the surgeons. The place where this incident occurred is a little below the glen and near the obelisk.

The night of the 30th closed without any further action, and both sides prepared for a final struggle on the morrow. Authorities differ as to the respective numbers on each side; but Sir William Wilde, who seems to have investigated the matter with some care, places the numbers at 36,000 Williamites and 23,000 Jacobites (*"The Boyne and the Blackwater,"* p. 249.) Storey, who was King William's chaplain, and was present at the engagement, estimates the respective forces at 36,000 and 25,000. (See *Storey's History*, page 70.) The Duke of Berwick, at page 63 of his memoirs, says, "The enemy had 45,000 and we were only 23,000." *"Macariae Excidium"* (p. 47) makes the Williamites double the number of their adversaries, and *Cane* gives the Williamites a majority of 12,000 at least (p. 207). The smallness of King James's army was even

jocularly referred to by some of William's foreign officers (*Storey*, p. 73).

The Williamites were all well disciplined soldiers, tried in many a foreign battlefield, and drawn from nearly every nationality in central Europe.

The Jacobites consisted of French and Irish, the French being well equipped and disciplined; but of the Irish a large number—five or six thousand at least—were raw levies, inexperienced, undisciplined, and little better than the insurgents in '98, armed with pikes and other improvised weapons.

The Williamites had about 50 pieces of artillery besides mortars (*"Macariae Excidium,"* p. 343). The Jacobites had but 12 field-pieces, of which only six were available on the battlefield, the remainder having been sent towards Dublin to protect the baggage (*Cane*, p. 211).

When, in addition to this great numerical disparity, we consider that so many of the Irish were practically useless as soldiers, being imperfectly armed, and that the Jacobites were almost totally deficient in artillery, we may fairly say that they were outnumbered by their opponents in the proportion of at least *two to one*.

Day dawned cloudlessly on Tuesday, 1st July, and the silvery waters of the Boyne glanced brilliantly beneath the morning sun; but before the early mists had risen from the surrounding heights, the braying of trumpets, neighing of steeds, and other martial sounds disturbed the rural stillness and proclaimed the presence of war.

William's plan of battle was to force the passage of the river in four places, as follows:—General Douglas with 10,000 men was to march at daybreak to the bridge and fords at Slane, and thence advance upon, and, if possible, outflank the Jacobite left wing—a march of about six miles. This passage having been accomplished, the Dutch Blue Guards, the French Huguenots and the Irish Enniskilleners commanded by Duke Schonberg were to enter at the ford opposite William's Glen. The Dames and Germans under Count Nassau were to cross at the shallows between the two islands; and the left wing, almost exclusively composed of Danish and Dutch cavalry, was to cross immediately eastward

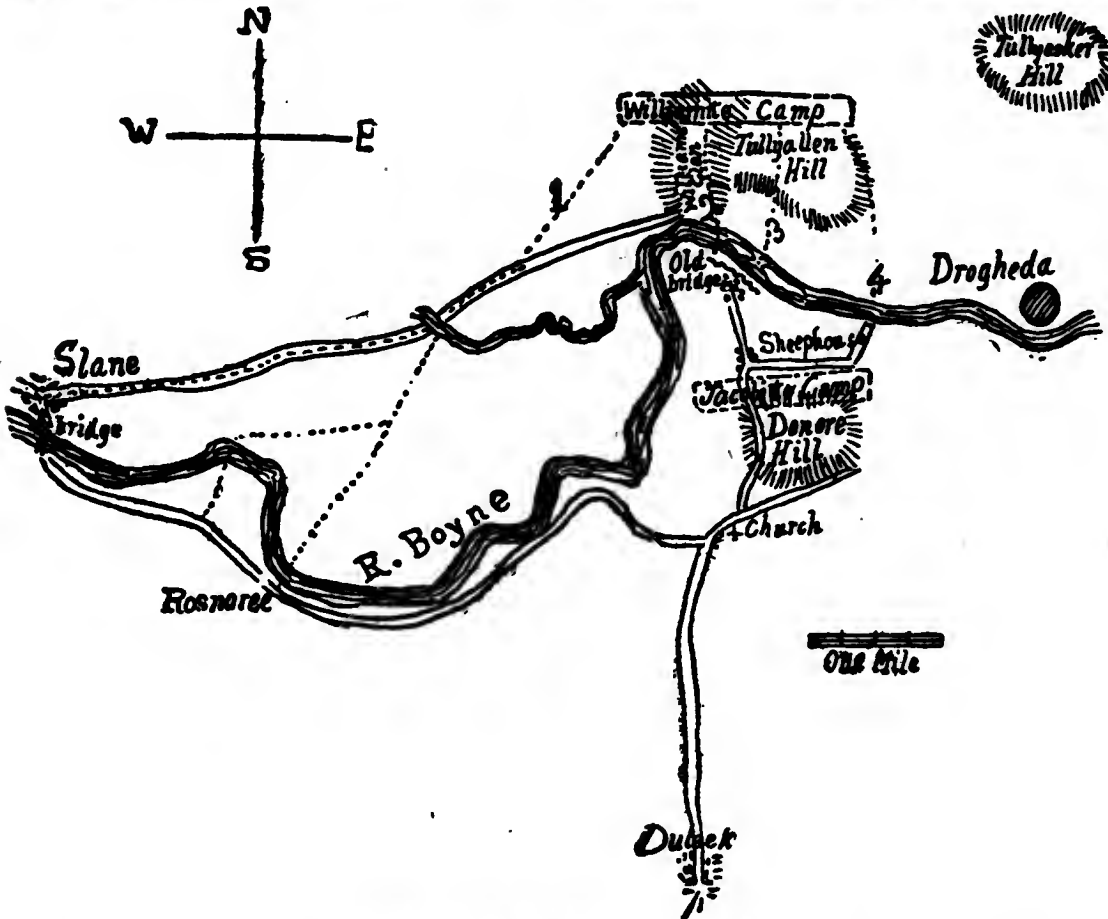
of Tullyallen hill. It may be mentioned that as it was summer the river was very low and fordable in almost any place.

It will be necessary to refer to the map to understand these several moves which I have numbered thus :—

- (1). 10,000 under Douglas to cross at Slane, &c.
- (2). Dutch, French, and Enniskilliners under Schonberg to cross at Oldbridge.

of cavalry were of course routed, about 70 of them being killed. The Jacobite left wing which was extended out towards Slane then came to their assistance and covered the retreat of the survivors.

About half past ten o'clock William, having been informed by special messenger of the success of this expedition, ordered the other attempts to be made. The Dutch Blue Guards, reputed the



THE BATTLE OF THE BOYNE.

- (3). Danes and Germans under Count Nassau.

- (4). Left wing under King William.

Douglas with his 10,000 men (nearly half the number of the Jacobites) marched to Slane; the horse crossed at Rosnaree, and some of the infantry at a ford about a mile higher up. Immediately on crossing they were met by Sir Neal O'Neill with some 500 or 600 cavalry, who for a short time by his skilful manœuvring held them in check, but O'Neill was ultimately killed, and the small force

finest infantry in the world, entered the river opposite Oldbridge, and the Danes and Germans at a ford between the two islands. The Irish foot resisted their progress, but being principally armed with pikes, their resistance was of short duration, and they fell back upon the line of cabins and rude defences on the southern bank, before the withering and well directed fire of their opponents.

Hamilton, leading the Irish horse, now advanced

to the river's edge; part wavered and fled before the terrible fire, but the remainder impetuously charged into the water, hurling back Dutch, Danes, and Brandenburgers, with the loss of Calimotte the leader of the Huguenots. Brave old Schonberg, then 82 years of age, stood on the northern bank at the entrance to William's Glen, watching the struggle with a small body of reserve, but when he learned of the death of his old friend and comrade Calimotte, he rushed into the river to rally the Huguenots without waiting to don his helmet or cuirass. Just as he was about to land at the opposite side Hamilton's cavalry again charged, with disastrous result to themselves, for they were met by a tremendous fire which emptied many a saddle, but they nevertheless broke the ranks of the Huguenots and in the struggle the gallant old Schonberg fell dead with a musket bullet through his head.

From the account of the battle given in the "*Histoire de la Revolution d'Irlande*," published at Antwerp in 1791, it seems likely that Schonberg fell a victim to a stray Williamite bullet. Storey also says that he was killed by the careless firing of his own men. A monument now stands on the spot to mark where he fell. A sketch of it is given on page 55.

The Irish cavalry, the only really effective Irish troops, performed prodigies of *vaillance*, considering their numbers. On another attempt being made by the Dutch and Danes to establish themselves, this famous cavalry charged with such effect that in a few moments they swept nearly all the Williamites from their positions on the southern bank of the Boyne. The Dutch Blues, however, stood unbroken by cavalry or infantry, and held their ground admirably though temporarily outnumbered.

William now led the left wing of 5,000 cavalry down to the river, eastward of Tullyallen Hill, and though wounded and scarcely able to use his right arm, he plunged into the water and rode at their head to the other side, where he effected a landing, apparently with little opposition. On reaching the bank, which was wet and swampy, his horse got bogged and he was forced to alight, till one of his officers extricated it. He then remounted, and led his

men along the lane to Sheephouse, whither the Jacobites were retiring, who at one time turned so fiercely at bay that they drove some of William's best troops down the hill, till some reinforcements enabled the Williamites to rally.

By this time both wings of the Jacobite army were closing in upon their centre. The left wing, temporarily successful at Rosnaree, but ordered to retire to support the centre, had fallen back upon Duleek, and the right wing and centre retired upon Donore Hill, and finally, towards evening, joined the left wing at Duleek. The retreat was effected in good order, with inconsiderable loss, and directed with consummate skill.

The advance of the Williamite right wing by Slane was a masterly manoeuvre, but it partly failed in its object. Had Douglas succeeded in outflanking the Jacobite left and seizing the pass of Duleek, so as to cut off James's road to Dublin, the result would have been the annihilation of the Jacobite army and the termination of the war at a blow. But fate decreed otherwise, and the Williamites had to be satisfied with an indecisive victory and a successful passage of the Boyne.

It will be observed that the victors made little or no attempt to follow up their success. Their cavalry pursued the Jacobites to Duleek, where the Irish rallied and presented a front, but the Williamites declined battle, and the last stand of the vanquished was made at the deep defile of Naul, in the extreme north of the county Dublin, on the borders of Meath; there the Williamites reined horse and returned to Duleek.

So ended the famous Battle of the Boyne—a battle of dynasties—where William of Orange snatched the sceptre from the enfeebled grasp of the ill-starred Stuart line.

It has been stated by many writers that James during the battle remained at Donore Church, which would be almost entirely out of view of the battlefield; but this statement is in conflict with nearly all accounts of the battle, and is not confirmed by any competent authorities. It is likely enough that he went there towards the close of battle, when his troops were being forced back from the river.

It should be mentioned that the celebrated fighting churchman, George Walker, who had so

distinguished himself at Derry, fell in this battle, and was immediately stripped and robbed by his own camp followers! ("Storey," p. 82.) It is even recorded that William, on hearing of his death, unsympathetically remarked, "Fool! what brought him there?" But he was undoubtedly a brave man, and well merited the tardy honour paid to his memory at Derry.

It is a strange fact that every Williamite soldier wore a spray of green in his cap, so that on this occasion, at least, green was the Orange colour. The Jacobites wore small pieces of white paper in their caps, white being the Jacobite colour.

Notwithstanding many statements to the contrary, James had shown considerable bravery on many a foreign battlefield, though his conduct on this occasion looked very like cowardice, and earned for him in Ireland an unsavoury sobriquet, which does not bear translation.

Considering the numbers engaged in this battle, the mighty issues at stake, and the enduring importance of the result, the number killed—400 Williamites and 1,000 Jacobites—seems surprisingly small.

There is no doubt that this victory has been vastly exaggerated; when we recollect the glaring disparity of numbers and equipments, that James concentrated the best of his troops into the apex of a triangle (a singularly bad piece of generalship), and that the Williamites had a king worth fighting for, which the Jacobites lacked, it is impossible but to conclude that "the glorious Battle of the Boyne," so long the shibboleth of party faction, so oft the watchword of fratricidal strife, is one of those popular delusions which only needs a perusal of history to dispel, and that success under such circumstances brings little of glory to the victors and still less disgrace to the vanquished.

## THE FIRST SIEGE OF LIMERICK.



THE victory at the Boyne and the surrender of Dublin opened the province of Leinster to the Williamites. The Jacobites now decided to fall back upon the Shannon as their line of defence, and occupy the fortified towns of Limerick and Athlone. The garrisons of the smaller towns came in considerable numbers to Limerick, and a large force of French, under General Lauzun, also proceeded there; but when Lauzun had inspected the fortifications of the town he pronounced it untenable, declaring that "it could be taken with roasted apples," and he accordingly marched off to Galway with his entire force, intending to embark for France. The defence of Limerick, therefore, devolved upon the Irish alone, and to them belongs the undivided honour of its success.

On 9th August, 1690, forty days after the Battle of the Boyne, William appeared before the walls of Limerick with his army, and encamped

at Singland, now a south-eastern suburb of the city.

According to O'Callaghan's "*Green Book*," where the matter is gone into with great minuteness, the Williamite forces at Limerick numbered 26,000. "*Villare Hibernicum*" makes them 38,500, but the former estimate is probably the more correct, as it is known that William detached from his army about 10,000 men to garrison other towns after the Battle of the Boyne. The Duke of Berwick says that the Irish numbered 20,000 infantry, of which only half were armed, and 3,500 cavalry;—"teute notre infanterie Irlandoise. qui montoit à environ vingt mille hommes, dont pourtant il n'y avoit plus de la moitié qui fut armée. Nous tinmes la campagne avec notre cavalerie, qui pouvoit faire trois mille cinq cents chevaux."—(*Memoires du Marechal de Berwick, tome I. p. 76.*)

William intended to await the arrival of his siege train, which was coming from Dublin under escort, as the artillery he had with him was of light calibre, and rather suited for field purposes.

than a siege. Towards evening he sent a trumpeter to summon the town to surrender, but Beisseleau, the governor, returned the answer that he hoped to gain the good opinion of the Prince of Orange by his vigorous defence of the town with which King James had entrusted him. William was rather disappointed at this reply, for he expected that the town would surrender at once on account of its inadequate defences; he therefore resolved to at once commence offensive operations.

On the 10th a Frenchman deserted from William's camp and made his way into the town, conveying the important intelligence that William's siege train was on its way from Dublin. It consisted of a number of heavy cannon, a quantity of ammunition and provisions, also some tin pontoon boats for crossing the river. When General Sarsfield heard this news he determined to intercept the convoy. He collected together about 600 light cavalry—picked men, commanded by an officer who knew every pass, wood, and bog in all the countryside, and on the night of Sunday, 10th August, he set out with his troopers on this daring enterprise.

Almost simultaneously with his departure an Irish gentleman came to William's camp and reported that Sarsfield had started on some mysterious nocturnal expedition. William apparently did not give the matter much consideration, for, although he issued orders for a body of cavalry to pursue him, they did not start till Tuesday morning!

Sarsfield directed his course towards Kilmaloe, about fifteen miles higher up the Shannon, keeping the river on his right all along. His immediate object now was to cross the Shannon and get into the county Tipperary, through which the convoy was passing, but this was no easy matter, for the bridges and fords were few, and vigilantly guarded by the Williamites. About ten miles above Limerick was O'Brien's Bridge, the ancient pass between Clare and Tipperary, but this he dared not attempt, for it, too, was held by the enemy. He and his men, accordingly, passed on through Bridgetown and Ballycorney till they reached Killaloe, which, however, they did not enter, lest they might attract notice, but kept to

one side and passed beyond it, crossing the Shannon between the town and Ballyvalley. Having now entered Tipperary, they marched south-eastward, almost in a direct line, for Keeper mountain, where they rested for a brief time.

Sarsfield soon ascertained the whereabouts of the convoy, and discovered that they intended to encamp that night at Ballyneety hill, about 18 miles south-east of Limerick and 15 miles from where he and his troopers now stood. Cautiously following by unfrequented routes, he at length reached Ballyneety that night, where the convoy was encamped on a grassy slope near an old ruined castle. Having, by accident, discovered that the watchword was, by a strange coincidence "Sarsfield" he stealthily approached the camp shortly after midnight, crossing the intervening hill, and descending on the Williamites from the summit. It was a calm moonlight night, and the camp apprehending no danger was stilled in sleep. The sentinel challenged. "Sarsfield is the word, and Sarsfield is the man," was the reply. The sentinel was cut down, and then upon the amazed and half-awakened Williamites, Sarsfield and his troopers swept with the suddenness and swiftness of a thunderbolt. Down they came with wild huzzas along the green sward, the turf quivering beneath their feet, their sabres flashing in the pale moonlight. Little resistance was offered; the men were sabred and shot down as they rushed from their tents, and those who could, escaped and hid themselves in the heather and bushes till morning. Sarsfield then collected the guns together, and having filled them with powder, he thrust their muzzles into the ground, put all the supplies and pontoon boats over them in a heap, and laying a train blew up all with a tremendous explosion which resounded through all the surrounding country, rudely disturbing the stillness of the night. Thus was destroyed the splendid siege train, which William had destined for the reduction of his refractory Irish subjects.

Meanwhile the counter expedition despatched by William were sluggishly making their way from the camp at Limerick; they started at two o'clock on Tuesday morning, but after about an hour "they saw a great light in the air, and

heard a strange rumbling noise, which some conjectured to be the train blown up, as it really was.—(*Story*, p. 119.)

The destruction of their artillery caused great annoyance to the Williamites, and an equal amount of rejoicing among the Irish within the city, who were much encouraged by this brilliant achievement of their dashing commander.

On 17th August William opened new trenches before the walls, determined to carry on the siege with the means and materials at his disposal, till the new siege train, for which he had sent to Waterford, should arrive. A bombardment continued till the 19th, when the King, riding about the trenches, narrowly escaped being killed, a cannon ball from the ramparts passing within a few inches of him. On the 20th the Irish made a sortie, inflicting considerable loss on the besiegers. After this the Williamites used red hot balls, causing much destruction in the town and greatly alarming the inhabitants, who never before had seen such missiles. The shells thrown into the city were of immense size, and would astonish even modern artillerymen. *Linehan*, the historian of Limerick, states that one in his possession is 18 inches in diameter and weighs 200lbs! The crumbling walls of the ancient city now began to show the effects of the bombardment, and the garrison adopted the strange expedient of hanging wool sacks outside them to deaden the force of the cannon, which *Story* compares to Josephus's defence of the towns in Galilee when he hung sacks of chaff over the walls to protect them from the battering rams of the Romans.

Hunger was now beginning to tell upon the intrepid garrison, their food being limited to beans and oatmeal, and these only in small quantities. The French, indeed, had promised provisions and assistance, but no tidings of them came, and the condition of the inhabitants was becoming more and more desperate every day.

Sarsfield, anticipating a breach in the walls under the continuous cannonading, caused masked batteries and mines to be constructed at the weakest points, so that if menaced by a storming party he could instantly effect their destruction.

At length, under the sustained fire of 36 pieces

of cannon and four mortars, a breach appeared in the walls near St John's Gate. On Wednesday, the 27th August, William ordered the assault. The garrison desired that the women and children should be removed from the town, but the women refused to forsake their husbands and brothers in the moment of danger.

It was half-past three in the afternoon. A deathlike silence prevailed. The sun shone brilliantly in the heavens, lighting up with its gladdening rays many a peaceful landscape by the fair waters of the Shannon. The Irish stood around the breach, grim and fierce determination depicted in their emaciated faces. Hunted and baited into their last stronghold, deserted by their allies and forsaken by their king—defiant still and desperate, the old patrician race turned resolutely at bay.



THE BRIDGE OF LIMERICK.

Far along the surrounding trenches they saw serried masses of dark-visaged warriors from many a distant sovereignty—from the swamps of low-lying Holland, the sunny plains of France, the gloomy Rhenish forests, and the bleak shores of Denmark—heterogeneous elements leagued together in a common bond of warfare.

Both sides waited in anxious expectancy for the signal of attack. At length it was announced by three successive booms from the cannon. The grenadiers leaped from the trenches and rushed furiously upon the counterscarp, throwing in their grenades and discharging their muskets at the defenders. The Irish were well prepared, and poured a destructive cross fire upon their assailants from the sides of the breach, the dust and smoke being so great that the combatants were almost entirely concealed from view.

At length their immediate supplies of ammunition being exhausted, the Irish, weak with privation and hunger, were gradually forced back from the breach, and the Williamites entered in seeming triumph. But now the townspeople, seeing the garrison overpowered, thronged in numbers to their assistance—the shipwright with his adze, the butcher with his knife, and the brawny blacksmith with his hammer. The women, too, in this terrible emergency, rushed into the midst of the combat and fought with amazing fury, using sticks, stones, bottles, and in fine, every kind of improvised weapon that desperate necessity could suggest. Encouraged by this unexpected support the garrison rally. They face about, and again meet their foes. A furious hand-to-hand struggle ensues, and the whole town resounds with the din. Now the Irish prevail, and now the Williamites. Victory wavers. At last the besiegers, after three hours' desperate fighting, yielding inch by inch, are forced back to the breach amid triumphant shouts from the Irish. And now the retreat becoming general, they rush back in headlong confusion—over the walls, outside the counterscarp falling in mingled heaps of living, dying, and dead.

When the fighting was at its very hottest, the Brandenburgers took possession of the Black Battery, little knowing of the volcano that slumbered beneath their feet. As they swarmed thick upon it Sarsfield fired the mine;—high above the din of battle rose a mighty roar which seemed to rend the very heavens asunder, and a dense mass of smoke and fire shot up into the sky, bringing up with it fort, men, and houses together in one mingled mass of ruin.

Foiled and defeated at every point William called off his men. "The King stood nigh Cromwell's Fort all the time, and the business being over, he went to his camp very much concerned, as indeed was the whole army, for you might have seen a mixture of anger and sorrow in everybody's countenance."

"We lost at least 500 upon the spot and had a thousand more wounded, as I understood by the surgeons of our hospitals, who are the preperest judges." (*Story*, p. 132.)

It was urged by some that William should order another attack, but he would not hazard it—he had lost too many men already. "The King, therefore, called a council of war, wherein it was resolved to quit the town and raise the siege, which, as the case stood with us, was no doubt the most prudent thing that could be done" (*Story*, p. 132). It will be remembered that this candid historian was King William's chaplain.



SARSFIELD'S STATUE.

Accordingly, on Sunday, the 31st August, 1690, William drew off his forces and commenced his retreat. He was evidently apprehensive of an attack from the Irish, for he placed some of his cavalry in the rear (*Story*, p. 133). To show his extreme anxiety to get his artillery away in safety it may be mentioned that (according to the same authority) the first day he marched it to Cullen, near the scene of Sarsfield's exploit, a distance of about twenty miles, which was no light day's march for heavy artillery, drawn by oxen over such bad roads as they had in those days. The Williamite losses in this siege were, according to their own accounts, 1,200, but according to the Jacobites 5,000. The Irish loss was probably about half that of the Williamites.

It was a brilliant victory for the Irish in three weeks' siege to have repulsed so formidable a force as that which triumphed at the Boyne.

#### THE BLACKSMITH OF LIMERICK.

He grasped his ponderous hammer, he could not stand it more,  
To hear the bombshells bursting and thundering battle's roar;  
He said, "The breach they're mounting, the Dutchman's murdering crew—  
I'll try my hammer on their heads, and see what *that* can do!

The blacksmith raised his hammer, and rushed into the street,  
His 'prentice boys behind him, the ruthless foe to meet—  
High on the breach of Limerick, with dauntless hearts they stood,  
Where bombshells burst, and shot fell thick, and redly ran the blood.

The first that gained the rampart he was a captain brave—  
A captain of the Grenadiers, with blood-stained dirk and glaive;  
He pointed and he parried, but it was all in vain,  
For fast through skull and helmet the hammer found his brain!

The next that topped the rampart he was a colonel beld;  
Bright through the dust of battle, his helmet flashed with gold.

"Gold is no match for iron," the doughty blacksmith said,  
And with that ponderous hammer he cracked the foe-man's head.

"Murrah for gallant Limerick!" Black Ned and Moran cried,  
As on the Dutchmen's leaden heads their hammers well they plied.

A bombshell burst between them—one fell without a groan,  
One leaped into the lurid air and down the breach was thrown.

"Brave smith! brave smith!" cried Sarsfield, "beware the treacherous mine!

Brave smith! brave smith! fall backward, or surely death is thine!"

The smith sprang up the rampart, and leaped the blood-stained wall,  
As high into the shuddering air went foemen, breach, and all.

Up like a red volcano they thundered wild and high—  
Spear, gun, and shattered standard, and foemen through the sky;

And dark and bloody was the shower that round the blacksmith fell—

He thought upon his 'prentice boys—they were avenged well.

ROBERT DWYER JOYCE

#### THE TWO SIEGES OF ATHLONE.



AFTER the battle of the Boyne, Lieutenant-General Douglas, with 12,000 men, 12 cannon, and 2 mortars (*Macariae Excidium*, p. 367), was despatched by William to besiege Athlone. It may be well to remark that Athlone is divided into two parts by the Shannon,

one part being in Leinster and the other in Connaught.

The town was commanded by Colonel Grace, a stout old veteran who had fought in the Cromwellian wars, and was now nearly 80 years of age. On 17th July Douglas's army

appeared before the walls, and as soon as they came within range were greeted by a vigorous fire from the Irish cannon. Having established himself in position Douglas sent a drummer to summon the town to surrender, but Grace declined to entertain any such proposal, and, firing a pistol over the messenger's head, told him that these were the only terms upon which he would treat with the besiegers. On Douglas's approach Grace had burnt the Leinster side of the town, destroyed the bridge across the Shannon, and then retired into the great castle, having previously strengthened the walls with immense earthworks to make them bombproof.

Douglas spent four days constructing entrench-

ments under a continuous fire from across the river; at the end of that time he had six guns planted in position opposite the ruined bridge, and commenced firing upon the castle. But his firing had little effect, for the cannon balls sank harmlessly into the great earthworks, and after three days' firing the only damage done was a slight breach in the battlements. On the other hand the firing from the castle caused great havoc among the besiegers, and killed many of their best officers. Douglas found Athlone much stronger than he had expected. The commander, Grace, was no ordinary adversary, having twice previously defended the town; and now he had a formidable array of ordnance and ample supplies of ammunition at his disposal. Apparently there was little hope of reducing the castle from the Leinster side. Douglas accordingly despatched a strong detachment north to Lanesborough, about twenty miles off, where there was a bridge across the Shannon. By this move he hoped to get round to the Connaught side of the town; but Grace had anticipated him there, for Lanesborough also was found bristling with defences, and its bridge swept by cannon.

Meanwhile the besiegers' supply of bread was failing, and their ardour slackened considerably under the steady and destructive fire from the castle; and, to make matters worse, news arrived that Sarsfield was rapidly advancing with a large force to the relief of the garrison. Grace, seeing signs of hesitancy among the besiegers, redoubled his efforts, and now hung out a blood-red flag, which signifies resistance *à outrance*. This was the last straw. Douglas now called a council of war with his officers, at which it was decided to abandon the siege, and at the dead of night on Friday, the 25th July, 1690, the Williamites stealthily withdrew from their positions, having lost about 300 men in the abortive attempt on the town; and so ended the first siege of Athlone.

On the 19th June, 1691—nearly a year afterwards—General Ginckel advanced towards Athlone with an army of about 18,000 men, 50 siege cannon, and eight mortars.—(*Captain Parker's Memoirs*, p. 26). In the previous siege Colonel

Grace had made no attempt to defend the English town—the portion at the Leinster side of the Shannon—as he considered the walls too weak to stand against cannon; but now he had repaired them as well as their condition would permit, and restored the fortifications within. These slender defences, however, soon gave way under the English artillery, and on the second day (the 20th) Ginckel had effected such a breach that he was able to carry it by assault; and the Irish, having lost about 60 killed and wounded, retired across the bridge to the Irish Town. The English attempted to follow, but now a number of the Irish faced them on the bridge, and by dint of extraordinary efforts, held it till their comrades behind broke down the arches with axes and picks, upon which the brave defenders escaped, some by plunging into the river and others by clambering across the tottering masonry with the aid of their comrades at the other side.



ATHLONE CASTLE.

On the 20th, General St. Ruth, who was at Ballinasloe, heard of the capture of the English town, and at once set out with his army to assist the garrison, encamping within a short distance of the walls. By the 23rd, nearly the whole side of the castle was battered down under the constant cannonading, and on the same day the English set fire to a mill upon the bridge, in which 62 men were burnt alive. Next day a party of the besieging force attempted as before to pass the river at Lanesborough, but were repulsed by its garrison under Edmund Boy O'Reilly.

On the 26th, seven distinct batteries of siege guns were pouring their iron hail into the town, and every breastwork and defence thrown up by the

Irish sank rapidly before the shot and shell of the well-served Williamite artillery. The Irish were swept away as fast as they attempted to repair them, but still they bravely struggled on.

Ginckel now began to seriously consider his position—his artillery could do no more; the town was a mass of crumbling ruins, and yet its obstinate defenders showed no signs of submission or surrender. Apparently there would be no town left to take if they could not soon enter it. It was accordingly resolved to force a passage into the town by repairing the broken bridge with planks. The besiegers, after considerable loss, though covered by a tremendous artillery fire, constructed a breastwork at the near end of the bridge. The Irish had another composed of wattles at their end, but it was set on fire by the English grenades, and the Irish were forced to leave it.

During the night of Saturday, 27th June, the English worked hard at the bridge, and when day dawned on Sunday, the 28th, the Irish saw with dismay that a few more planks would complete the passage, and then the town would be in the hands of the enemy. An English battery was placed to sweep the bridge, so that it would be certain death to appear even for an instant upon it. At this critical moment one of the Irish, named Costume, stepped forward and called upon ten others to follow him and save Athlone. Ten volunteers were easily found, and with Costume at their head, these brave men advanced towards the bridge and faced the battery. The English were amazed at their intrepidity and recklessness. With desperate and frantic energy they proceeded to tear up the planks and hurl them into the river. The English battery roared, the bridge was swept by grape, and when the smoke cleared the whole eleven lay dead! But the bridge must go down! Undismayed by the fate of their comrades eleven more came forward and take their places upon it. Again the planks are torn up and hurled below, and again a terrific fire issues from breastwork and battery, killing nine of the second batch, but not till they have thrown down the last plank—and saved the town!

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thus its counterpart in our own history in the fight for the bridge of Athlone, whose gallant defenders exhibited a devotion and self-sacrifice as noble as ever graced the annals of Rome or immortalised the pass of Thermopylae. Though no stately cenotaph commemorates their deed, nor pompous crypt surrounds their humble dust, in the affectionate memories of the Irish race they have a monument of deathless and imperishable fame.

Failing to pass the bridge, the besiegers held a council of war, at which it was resolved to make another attempt while two other parties were to simultaneously cross the river by the pontoons and the ford. St. Ruth observing the preparations, and guessing their object, drafted troops into the town, and during the night made ample arrangements for the reception of the assailants. The attack upon the bridge was commenced by the grenadiers throwing in their grenades among the Irish, who returned their volleys. The Irish, however, succeeded in setting fire to the English fascine or breastworks, and the attacking party were forced to abandon them. "By this time it was past twelve o'clock, and the generals, finding the attack upon the town that way was like to cost many lives, they deferred it till new measures were consulted on; nor knew they well what to think at present, seeing themselves defeated in so great a project. (*Storey*, p 104.)

On June 30th another council of war was held, and the advisability of raising the siege was debated, but many of the principal officers opposed this course, pointing out the shame of retreating from a town already in ruins. While they were yet in deliberation, two officers, deserters from the Irish, came and informed Ginckel that now was his opportunity for an attack; that the Irish, having repelled the last assault, believed the besiegers were disheartened, and would draw off, and so thinking themselves quite secure, were unprepared, and could easily be surprised.

The suggestion seemed a good one, and Ginckel at once acted upon it. Immediate orders were issued for the troops to be in readiness in the morning, and the signal for advance was to be the tolling of the 6 o'clock church bell. It had

nents under a continuous fire from across the river; at the end of that time he had six guns planted in position opposite the ruined bridge, and commenced firing upon the castle. But his firing had little effect, for the cannon balls sank harmlessly into the great earthworks, and after three days' firing the only damage done was a slight breach in the battlements. On the other hand the firing from the castle caused great havoc among the besiegers, and killed many of their best officers. Douglas found Athlone much stronger than he had expected. The commander, Grace, was no ordinary adversary, having twice previously defended the town; and now he had a formidable array of ordnance and ample supplies of ammunition at his disposal. Apparently there was little hope of reducing the castle from the Leinster side. Douglas accordingly despatched a strong detachment north to Lanesborough, about twenty miles off, where there was a bridge across the Shannon. By this move he hoped to get round to the Connaught side of the town; but Grace had anticipated him there, for Lanesborough also was found bristling with defences, and its bridge swept by cannon.

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been discovered that the river was fordable close to the bridge, owing to the extremely dry weather; accordingly, when the time had arrived, sixty grenadiers in armour, followed by others, rapidly crossed the ford, and gaining the far bank, rushed around and planked the bridge, while others arranged the bridge of pontoons. By these energetic measures the besiegers passed over so rapidly that in half an hour they had possession of the town, before the Irish could more than realise what had taken place.

In this final assault there fell the gallant old Grace, who perhaps would not have desired to survive the fall of the town he had so long and so ably defended.

There is no doubt that the dissensions and

jealousies between the Irish and French commanders largely contributed to the issue of this siege, for no one seems to have had sufficient authority to enforce obedience. St. Ruth appears to have been guilty of grave remissness, as at the time of the assault he was amusing himself at his camp two miles away.

The inadequate nature of the defences on this occasion may be judged from the fact that on entering, the English found only six brass guns and two mortars in the whole town! (*Storey*, p. 108). The same historian (at p. 115) states that this siege cost the Williamites "12,000 cannon bullets, 600 bombs, nigh 50 tons of powder, and a great many tons of stones shot out of our mortars."

## AUGHIRM.



IMMEDIATELY after the capture of Athlone, St. Ruth marched his army to Ballinasloe, fourteen miles westward, and encamped on the western bank of the river Suir. He was anxious for another engagement as soon as possible in order to retrieve his reputation, so shaken by the loss of Athlone. On the 11th of July the Williamites advanced to Ballinasloe, but by this time St. Ruth had shifted his quarters to the village of Aughrim, five miles further westward, where he took up a strategic position on the green slopes at the hill of Kilcommodan, with his advanced guards posted on the Corbally hills. His army extended about two miles in length, from Aughrim to Urachree. All along their front, at the foot of the hill, was a small brook, running through an impassable marsh, now meadowlands and pasture.

The two principal passes leading around this morass to the dry uplands of Kilcommodan were the pass of Urachree on the *right*, and the pass of Aughrim on the *left* of the Jacobite army. Both were held by the Jacobites. Urachree was the weaker of these passes; it was more open than the

other, and was more practicable for cavalry movements. On its inner side it was formed by the gentle slope of Kilcommodan; on its outer by steep hills and bogs. It was the most available point of the Jacobite position.

The pass of Aughrim was much more difficult. It was closer to the Jacobite centre than Urachree, and was flanked on one side by the marsh, and on the other by a great red bog. At the very narrowest part of the pass the little stream which caused the morass crossed the road, and ran into the bog on the opposite side. A short distance beyond this, on the right hand approaching Kilcommodan, stood the ruined castle of Aughrim, one of the ancient strongholds of the O'Kellys. The possession of this castle, dilapidated though it was, was of great strategic importance, as it commanded the passage of the road—so narrow that only two horsemen could ride abreast—leading out of the pass of Aughrim to the open ground beyond.

St. Ruth displayed consummate skill in his choice of ground. Along the north-eastern side of Kilcommodan his army was drawn up in array, and from his camp down the slope of the hill to the morass below, were a number of parallel rows

of lofty whitethorn hedges, many of which remain at the present day. In these St Ruth had placed his foot soldiers, and so arranged matters as to facilitate communication from one line to another at the sides, in order that a body of assailants advancing from hedge to hedge in front might be effectively attacked on both flanks as they advanced up the hill. He also cut gaps in these hedges to enable his cavalry to charge down the hill when necessary.

The Castle of Aughrim was garrisoned by Colonel Walter Burke's Irish regiment, with two pieces of cannon, and behind, in a hollow, was a small body of light cavalry, to attack any artillery that might be brought to bear upon the castle by the Williamites. Upon the other side of the pass, opposite the castle, a strong body of Irish infantry was posted, so that the Pass of Aughrim was almost impregnable from any quarter.



KILCOMMODAN HILL AND MODERN CHURCH. SCENE OF ST. RUTH'S DEATH.

St Ruth had few artillery—only nine guns—(*Green Book*, p. 373); two of these defended the castle, and the remaining seven he divided into two batteries—one on the right slope of Kilcommodan, sweeping the Pass of Urachree, and the other on the left slope, covering the castle. He had no artillery in front, his plan being to allow the Williamite foot to approach, and then to sweep them down the hill with his cavalry into the morass, where they would be all cut off before their artillery could save them.

As to numbers, *Storey*, *Harris*, *Tindal*, and *Dalrymple* variously estimate the Jacobites as being from 25,000 to 28,000 strong, and the Williamites from 17,000 upwards. O'Halloran, a native of Limerick, who had opportunities of conversing with many who had fought

at the battle, writing in 1772, estimates the Jacobites at 15,000 and the Williamites at 25,000. '*Macariac Excidium*' (p. 131) makes the Jacobites 14,000. The official account in the *London Gazette* says that the Jacobites were 28,000, and were superior in number to the Williamites. The Jacobites had only nine pieces of cannon, while the Williamites had 24 ('*Macariac Excidium*,' p. 442). O'Callaghan, who has certainly devoted more research to the matter than any of these writers, and gives even the names and strengths of the several regiments in "*The Green Book*," estimates the Jacobites at 15,000 and the Williamites at 26,000 or 27,000.

The night of Saturday, 11th July, 1691, fell without any action between the respective belligerents, but the English generals carefully viewed the ground and studied the positions on a map of the district. On next morning (Sunday) about six o'clock, the Williamites started from Ballinasloe, but, the morning being foggy, they halted till about noon, when the fog cleared. St Ruth, seeing them approach, deployed two lines in front of his camp to show that he was resolved to fight.

Ginckel ascended to the top of a hill about half a mile from St Ruth's camp, from which he perceived the desirability of securing the pass of Urachree on the Jacobite right, as affording the easiest way in getting behind their camp. He accordingly sent seventeen Danish troopers towards it, but they were at once repulsed by the outposts. He then sent a larger number to remain at the entrance to the pass to prevent the enemy from advancing, and shortly afterwards, about two o'clock, attempted to force the pass by larger numbers, but was each time repulsed, the Jacobites meeting the attacks by rapidly throwing out relief parties from their centre. At last the Jacobites made a feint retreat to draw their adversaries into an ambushade. The English dragoons eagerly followed, when they were unexpectedly assailed by a discharge of musketry, but notwithstanding this they courageously dismounted and advanced towards the hedge which concealed their assailants, and killed most of those who remained.

But now, while so engaged and dismounted, the

Irish cavalry charged and drove them out of the pass in complete disorder. Ginckel then abandoned the attempt on Urachree, and, holding a council of war with his officers, it was decided on account of their disadvantageous position to postpone the attack till next day. But perceiving some confusion on the Jacobite right, this order was rescinded, and it was resolved to persist in the attempt on Urachree with a still stronger force, in the hope of compelling St. Ruth to draw some troops from his centre and left to meet the attack. This, it was expected, would weaken the Jacobite left, and thus facilitate an attack on Aughrim Castle (*Storey*, p. 128.)

Accordingly, at five o'clock, the battle was resumed. The Williamite foot, consisting of Danes, French, and Germans, marched right up against the ditches on the slope of the hill near Urachree. These ditches were held by the Irish infantry, "who behaved themselves like men of another nation, defending their ditches stoutly; for they would maintain one side till our men put their pieces over at the other, and then, having lines of communication from one ditch to another, they would presently post themselves again, and flank us" (*Storey*, p. 129). This desperate fighting, resembling the struggle at La Haye Sainte at Waterloo, continued for about half an hour, during which time the rest of the two armies remained inactive, except the artillery, which continuously played on both sides.

St. Ruth now, seeing his right pressed hard by a superior force, despatched some cavalry and infantry towards Urachree to their relief. This was what Ginckel desired. He now sent four regiments to cross the morass at the foot of the hill, and attack the Jacobite centre in front, while he simultaneously despatched a body of cavalry round by Aughrim Castle to support them. The infantry sank to their waists in the bog, and were met by a heavy fire from the Jacobites, but they nevertheless established themselves on the opposite side, and drove the Jacobites from one hedge to another, till the Williamites at last approached the encampment at the brow of the hill.

St Ruth now saw the plan which he had conceived with such marvellous skill gradually de-

velop itself almost without a hitch or mishap. Retiring up the hill before the advancing English the Irish foot suddenly divided in two, and then, like a wave receding, only to return in greater force, impetuously attacked their assailants in flank; while through the space thus created in front St Ruth poured his cavalry in overwhelming numbers down the hill through the gaps which he had cut in the hedges for that purpose. The result was inevitable. The English foot held their ground obstinately, and fought with extraordinary coolness and determination; but it was a hopeless struggle. They were utterly unable to withstand the downhill cavalry charge, and in a few minutes they broke and fled in headlong confusion back again to the morass which they had crossed, great numbers being killed in the attempt to recross it. (*Storey*, p. 130.)

The Jacobite troops now pressed the advantage thus gained, and, crossing the morass in places, advanced to attack the Williamites on their own ground and succeeded in maintaining themselves there for a time.

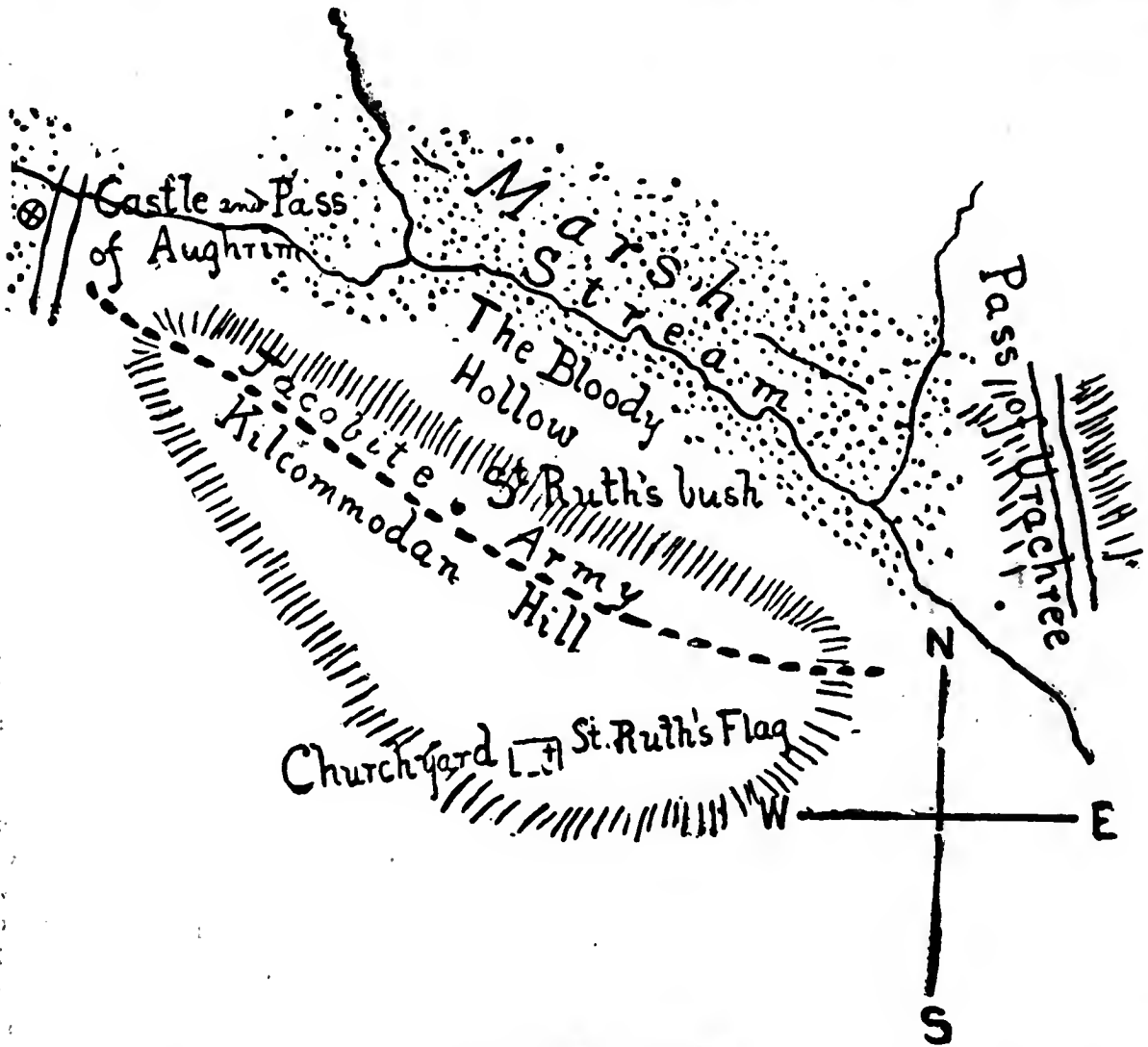
While these four regiments were being routed in this manner a larger body attempted the morass over near Aughrim Castle, but fell into an ambuscade and broke up in such complete disorder that "it was believed by all who saw the flight that the English had lost the battle."—(*Mackay* as quoted in "*Green Book*," page 415.)

A great part of the Williamite foot were now in disorder at the base of the hill, but they rapidly reformed and were reinforced by a large body under Major-General Talmash. They then again faced their foes and once more advanced up the hill, but were met by the same tactics as before and repulsed with great slaughter.

Meanwhile the Williamite right wing, composed of cavalry and infantry, with their artillery, were advancing towards the pass at Aughrim to succour the foot, which seemed in great peril. They dislodged the Irish from the mouth of the defile, but both parties were apparently unable to use their artillery at this point on account of the way in which the combatants were mixed. At this juncture, by a misunderstanding or mistake on the part of one of the Irish officers, some troops were detached from the Jacobite left.

and drawn off towards Urachree, and the English infantry, instantly seizing the advantage, forced a passage across the bog over near the castle. They drove the Irish infantry before them, and advanced till checked by a cavalry charge. The English cavalry and artillery were now making all possible speed to come to their assistance

Colonel Walter Burke, the commander of the castle, when he opened the barrels of ammunition, found that the bullets with which he had been served, were for the English muskets, whereas his men were equipped with French ones, which were of smaller bore, and consequently the bullets were useless ! (See "*MacUoghegan's*



BATTLE OF AUGHRIM.

round by the Pass of Aughrim—they would have to defile along a narrow and difficult road beside the castle, which with its outworks was garrisoned by nearly 2,000 men. Such a pass was believed to be impregnable, and would undoubtedly have been so but for the extraordinary blunder which then became evident.

History," also "Light to the Blind," in "*Plunkett MSS.*," edited by J. T. Gilbert, Esq., M.R.L.A.). The garrison in desperation fired their ramrods and the buttons off their coats, but it was of little avail. The van of the English horse passed at a gallop through the narrow causeway, while portion of the infantry captured the outworks of the castle,

St. Ruth observing the progress made by the Williamite right over near the castle, and perceiving that they were forcing their way through the pass, resolved to make a downhill charge upon them, and for that purpose placed himself at the head of his guards. But that charge was fated never to be made, for as St. Ruth was about to lead it a cannon ball struck him, and he fell forward on his horse a headless and a gory corpse. This event turned the tide of battle. Captain Parker, who was fighting against that part of the Jacobite army in which St. Ruth fell, says in his memoirs (p. 35 and 36), "had it not been that St. Ruth fell it is hard to say how matters would have ended; for to do him justice, notwithstanding his oversight at Athlone, he was certainly a gallant, brave man and a good officer, as appeared by the disposition he made of his army that day. His centre and right wing still maintained their ground, and had he lived to order Sarsfield down to sustain his left wing it would have given affairs a turn on that side."

No officer was able to take St. Ruth's place for he had not confided his plan of battle to any of his subordinates, with whom he was on rather bad terms since the mishap at Athlone. Seeing their commander fall, the Jacobite guards halted and a considerable delay occurred. There was no one to give orders. The Irish cavalry defending the pass drew off and a retrograde movement commenced. The Williamites now gradually passed across the morass and extended their wings right and left, amid a continued fire and hot dispute all along the line, the Irish still defending their ditches desperately. Driven from these, the Irish retired up the hill, followed by the Williamites, and now the Jacobite cavalry, seeing that the day was lost, deserted the infantry and thought only of saving themselves. The Williamite troopers pursued the Jacobites across the hill and for miles from the battlefield, till the sun set upon that bloody scene and with it the star of the Stuarts for ever.

The slaughter was immense—4,000 or 5,000 at least—and would probably have been still greater but for darkness setting in, accompanied by a thick mist, which stopped the pursuit. The Williamite loss was, according to Captain Parker,

3,000. Many credible historians, Dr Leslie, Dalrymple, &c, as well as most Jacobite accounts of the battle, state that the conquerors gave no quarter, and the proportion between killed and prisoners (7,000 killed and 450 prisoners, as stated in *Storey's History*, pp. 136-7) would seem to bear out their testimony. Evidently in extenuation of this, *Storey* (p. 123) states that the Jacobites intended to give no quarter if they were victorious.

It was a decisive and crowning victory for the Williamites, and a disastrous overthrow for their opponents, many of whom now retired to Limerick. Although the victory was to a certain extent a chance one, it should not in any way detract from the gallantry shown by the Williamite infantry, who, though beaten repeatedly down the hill, returned again and again with dogged and desperate determination to the attack.

*Storey* says of the battlefield—"The place where this battle was fought will make a noise in history for the future, though there's nothing worth taking notice of near it. For that which they call the Castle of Aughrim is only an old ruinous building, with some walls and ditches about it, and never has been a place of any strength, only as it's seated upon a pass. There are about half a score little cabbins; on the other side a small brook, with the ruins of a little church, and a priory dedicated to St. Catherine, and founded by the Butlers; the whole being at this day the estate of the Duke of Ormond."

Of course the place is greatly changed since then, and but a small fragment of the castle now remains. Traditions of the great battle are, however, quite vivid among the peasantry. In the churchyard of Kilcommidan Church, of which now scarcely a trace is left, is "St. Ruth's Flag," which is popularly believed to mark his grave, but it is supposed that his remains, if they ever rested there, were subsequently removed elsewhere. A whitethorn bush, called "St. Ruth's Bush," on the north-eastern slope of the hill, planted there to commemorate the event, marks the spot where he fell.

At the base of the hill, on its northern side, is a place called "Glen-na-Fulla," or "The Bloody Hollow," where the Irish surrounded in the

battle, were slain in great numbers. For fifty or sixty years afterwards their bleached bones might be seen strowed around the country—a melancholy sight and a dismal memento of the Irish Stuart wars.

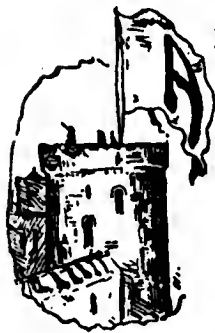
“Night closed around the conqueror’s way,  
And lightning shewed the distant hill,

Where those who lost that dreadful day  
Stood, few and faint—but fearless still.

Forget not the field where they perished:—  
The truest, the last of the brave;  
All gone—and the bright hopes we cherished  
Gone with them, and quenched in the grave.”

—MOORE.

## THE SECOND SIEGE OF LIMERICK AND THE TREATY.



AFTER the defeat at Aghrim, Tyrconnell sent a message to King James announcing that all was lost, and that unless immediate succour arrived it was useless to continue resistance. Meanwhile, Galway having submitted, he made preparations to again put Limerick

into a condition of defence, and collected stores of provisions and ammunition, but on 14th August, 1691, he died of apoplexy at the house of the French commander. On the 15th an advanced party of Ginckel’s troops approached Limerick, and on making a reconnaissance, saw the formidable preparations which had been made by Sarsfield and Tyreconnell to fortify the city. The walls had been strengthened by great earthworks, new forts had been built and old ones repaired.

On the 25th August the remainder of the Williamite army arrived with sixty pieces of cannon, none less than 12-pounders, and nineteen mortars (Williamite official pamphlet—*Diary of the Siege and Surrender of Limerick, &c.*, pp. 6 and 7.) By the 27th they had captured some of the outworks, and sent detached parties of artillery to attack and destroy all the isolated castles in the neighbourhood, for Ginckel was afraid to allow them to stand, the Irish having acquired such a reputation for defending fortifications. By the end of the month the bombardment of the city was in full swing, and in a few days more parts of it were set on fire by the shells

On the 8th September a tremendous fire was commenced with red-hot balls and shells, making a breach in the walls and destroying great numbers of houses. On 12th the town was nearly all ruins, but the besiegers’ supplies being nearly exhausted, and the garrison making no sign of submission, preparations were made to raise the siege, and a message to that effect was sent to London. But meanwhile the besiegers appear to have changed their counsels.

In the evening of 15th September a strong body of horse and foot set out after dark and marched to a shallow place on the river; two miles above Limerick, and about midnight they commenced to lay a bridge of boats, which they completed by morning.

Brigadier Clifford, who had been posted there by Sarsfield to prevent a surprise, shamefully neglected his duty, and allowed the Williamites to pass over almost without any resistance. The news that the Williamites had crossed the river, and were attacking the town from the Clare side, caused great consternation among the Irish, who flocked into the city from all the outlying works.

On 22nd September Ginckel himself, with some of his principal officers and a strong detachment of artillery, crossed the river, under a troublesome fire from the Irish, and marched round to the works protecting Thomond Bridge, the only approach to the city from the Clare side.

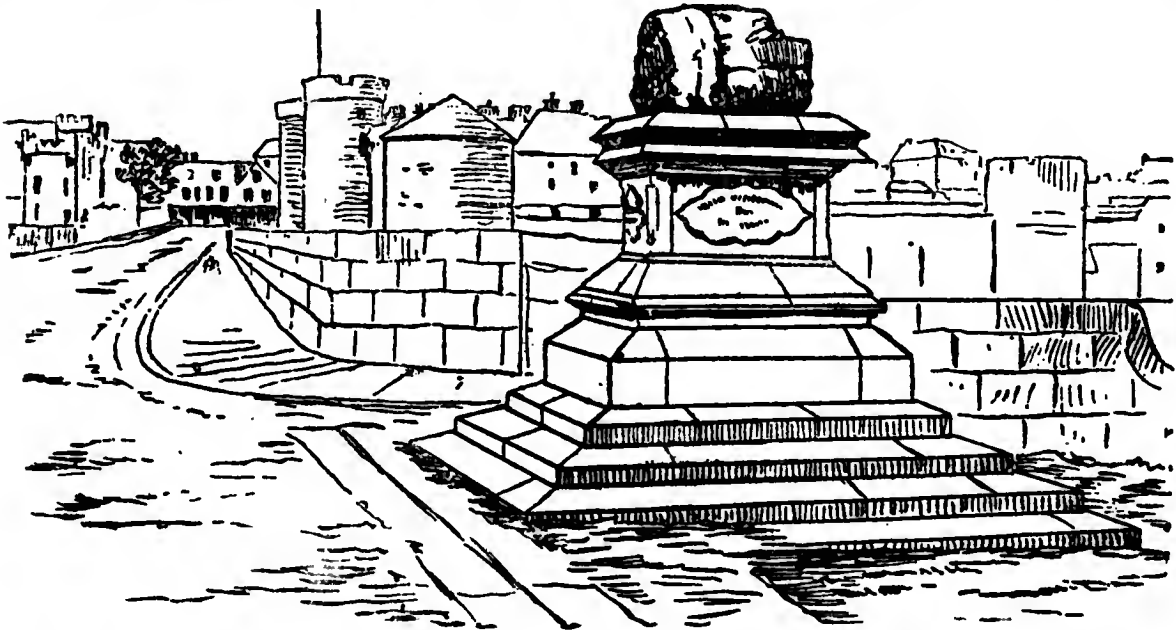
A desperate conflict ensued, and the loss was considerable on both sides, but ultimately the Williamites captured the works, and drove the Irish out of them and over to Thomond Bridge. The French officer in command of the bridge, seeing the Irish approach, pursued by the William-

ites, and fearing that besiegers and besieged would enter together in the confusion, to his shame be it said, raised the drawbridge, and left his friends at the mercy of their pursuers.

The foremost of the Irish, pressed forward by these in the rear, fell over the fall of the drawbridge into the river and were mostly drowned. "The rest cried out for quarter, holding up their handkerchiefs and whatever else they could get; but before killing was over they were laid on heaps upon the bridge higher than the ledges of it; so that they were all either killed or taken, except about 120 that got into the town before the

chope came to the English camp and dined with General Ginckel. Hostages were exchanged as a preliminary to a treaty, and on the 27th the Irish made their proposals for a surrender, which were rejected by Ginckel as unreasonable. Next day, however, a number of the principal Irish officers proceeded to Ginckel's camp, and after a protracted consultation agreed to certain articles under which not only Limerick, but also all the forts and castles held by the Irish were to be surrendered, and the war abandoned.

But the Irish commanders were not satisfied that a treaty of such vast importance in its issues



THE TREATY STONE, LIMERICK.

bridge was drawn up, and many of those cut and slashed to the purpose." (*Storey*, p 224-5.)

This miserable incident greatly accentuated the feelings of distrust long entertained by the Irish towards the French, who, it was now believed, were wearied of the war and anxious to terminate it at any cost. Two days after this the Irish beat a parley. Of what use was further resistance? The most sanguine among them could not hope, by a successful defence of their city, to re-establish upon the British throne the wretched, vacillating Stuart. Negotiations were opened, and on the 26th Sarsfield and General Wau-

should be signed by General Ginckel on his own responsibility, and so the Lords Justices in Dublin were sent for, and the whole matter lay in abeyance pending their arrival.

Meanwhile the Williamite and Jacobite troops became on friendly terms and visited each other's camps.

About nine o'clock p.m. on 1st October the Lords Justices arrived at the camp, and on the next day Sarsfield, Wauchope, and all the principal Irish officers and functionaries attended at Ginckel's camp, where there was a long debate, lasting till after midnight, and on the follow-

ing day the treaty was duly signed by the Irish and French and the Lords Justices and Williamite commanders. There were two sets of articles—the Military Articles, providing for the surrender of the Irish towns, etc., signed by the French and Irish commanders; and the Civil Articles, providing principally for the civil and religious liberties of the Irish Catholics, signed by the Lords Justices and Williamite officers.

These Articles, 29 in the first and 13 in the second set, are given in detail in most complete histories—*Storey*, *MacGeoghegan*, *Linahan*, etc.—and it would be impossible in the limited space at my disposal to more than briefly outline them.

The Military Articles provided that all persons wishing to leave the realm should have full liberty to go beyond the seas to any foreign country except England or Scotland; that if plundered on the way the Government should compensate them; that a fleet should be provided for their conveyance; that the garrison of Limerick should march out with all the honours of war—colours flying, drums beating, etc.;—also that those who elected to enter the service of William should retain their rank and pay.

It is the Civil Articles, however, that constitute the most important part of this famous treaty. These, 13 in number, the Irish vainly hoped would prove the Magna Charta of their religious liberties. Article I. states “that the Roman Catholics of Ireland shall enjoy such privileges, in the exercise of their religion, as are consistent with the laws of Ireland, or as they did enjoy in the reign of King Charles II.; and their Majesties (as soon as their affairs will permit them to summon a Parliament in this Kingdom) will endeavour to secure the Roman Catholics such further security in that particular as may preserve them from any disturbance upon the account of their said religion.” Article II. granted pardon and protection to all who served James on taking the *Oath of Allegiance*. Articles III., IV., and V. extend the provisions of the Treaty to Irish merchants, officers, and gentlemen beyond the seas, as well as other persons. Article VI. prohibits all private suits-at-law for trespass and other personal offences committed during the war. Article VII. provides that “every nobleman and gentleman

comprised in the 2nd and 3rd Articles shall have liberty to ride with a sword and a case of pistols if they think fit, and keep a gun in their house for the defence of same or fowling.” Article VIII. allows the inhabitants of Limerick and other towns to remove their goods without being searched. Article IX. is—“The oath to be administered to such Roman Catholics as submit to their Majesty’s Government, shall be the oath aforesaid, and no other.” The Irish Catholics were very particular as to this point, lest the *Oath of Supremacy* should be administered to them, which of course they could not accept, as it involved the recognition of the Sovereign as the spiritual and temporal head of their Church, in opposition to the Pope. Article X. enacts that no person or persons who break any of these articles shall cause any other person to lose the benefit of them. Article XI. deals with arrests and executions for debt. Article XII. undertakes that the treaty shall be ratified by their Majesties within the space of three months or less, and that they shall have it confirmed in Parliament. Article XIII. deals with the debts of Colonel John Browne.

The great majority of the Irish troops elected to go abroad, and served in France and elsewhere—they formed the famous Irish Brigades renowned in song and story. Sad was their parting with the old land which they loved so dearly, for which they had fought so well, on whose green fields and swelling hills lay the bones of so many of their gallant comrades.

The principal article of the Treaty provided that the Roman Catholics should have the same privileges as they had in the reign of Charles II. During that time there were few repressive acts in force against the Irish Catholics. The Oath of Supremacy was not required except when formally administered to public functionaries; and both Houses of Parliament were open to them.

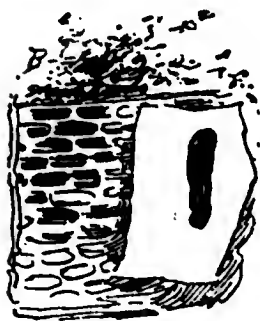
It is scarcely necessary to tell the rest of this sad and miserable story. It will be remembered that the Treaty was signed on 3rd October, 1691. A few months afterwards Parliament met in Dublin and entirely repudiated it. Within five years not a vestige of the privileges which it guaranteed remained. The whole country seemed to have become insane on the subject of Popery, and

there were apparently no limits to legislation on the subject.

It is worthy of mention that a day or two after the Treaty was signed, a great French fleet of eighteen men-of-war, four fire ships, and twenty ships of burden arrived in the Shannon with reinforcements, provisions, and ammunition for Limerick. This fleet was sufficiently strong to overpower the entire English naval force and put enough men and supplies into the town to make a prolonged defence. Ginckel was greatly disconcerted when he learned of its arrival, and fearing that the Irish would now break the Treaty and renew the war, he at once despatched mes-

sengers for assistance. But his fears were groundless, for the Irish, though they regretted having lost so good an opportunity, considered the Treaty irrevocable, and that their honour depended upon its observance—(Storey, pp. 271-3.)

In justice to his memory it should be stated that history attaches to William none of the stigma for the atrocities of these dark and terrible times. He, and indeed his officers too, acted their parts honourably and with perfect *bona fides*. He was too brave a soldier to trample on an unfortunate and fallen foe, and he would undoubtedly have observed the Treaty had he been permitted to do so by his Parliament.



## CONCLUSION.

IRELAND'S military history may be said to have terminated with the Treaty of Limerick. In the two centuries which have elapsed since the Williamite war, there have been unhappily many disturbances in the country, but nothing that could be dignified by the name of war. The year 1715 was memorable for the rebellion of the Pretender in Scotland, but in Ireland there was no sympathetic movement; all martial spirit had been crushed out of the country by the recent disastrous campaign, the expatriation of the Irish soldiers, and the cruel laws that followed.

In 1745 there was a rebellion in Scotland in favour of Prince Charles Edward, the young Pretender, but the possibility of a responsive movement in Ireland was averted by an astute temporary policy of conciliation.

In 1759 rumours of a French invasion caused some alarm, and in the early part of the following year a landing was effected at Carrickfergus, by Thurot, a brave but Quixotic Frenchman of Irish descent. He captured the castle and held it for a few days, after which he re-embarked, but on his return voyage he was met by three English frigates, and in the sharp action which ensued Thurot was

killed and his three vessels were disabled and taken.

About this time the Catholics first ventured to agitate for a repeal of the oppressive laws under which they suffered.

The year 1776 is marked by the revolt of the American colonies, which in the following year resulted in their independence. To meet the great drain upon the army caused by the American war, nearly all the troops were drafted out of Ireland, which thereupon was left in such a defenceless condition that the Irish Parliament enrolled and armed a numerous volunteer force.

Towards the close of 1779 some friction arose between the Irish and English Parliaments in reference to export duties on Irish goods which in the following year culminated in Grattan's memorable Declaration of Parliamentary independence by which it was sought to free the Irish Parliament from the supremacy of the English Legislature as embodied in Poyning's Law. By this law no measure could be laid before the Irish Parliament till it had been submitted to and approved by the English Government and Council. Grattan's declaration, however, met with little attention from the English Ministry. Meanwhile the Volunteer movement had attained vast dimensions. There were

now nearly 100,000 of all ranks, artillery and infantry, officered by the flower of the Irish aristocracy under Lord Charlemont as Commander-in-Chief. The English Ministry at this time commanded a strong majority in the Irish Parliament, and, after a protracted struggle, on 11th December, 1781, a motion for a repeal of Poyning's Law was defeated by an overwhelming Government majority.

A few days later Lord Charlemont invited a conference of all the Irish Volunteer Corps to meet at Dungannon to consider the action of the Parliament. The conference took place on 15th February, 1782, and there in conclave assembled, the representatives of 100,000 Volunteers passed a series of resolutions denying and repudiating the supremacy which Poyning's Law gave to the English over the Irish Parliament.

On the 16th of the following April Grattan again proposed his famous resolution, which now passed, and on the 17th May the matter was brought before both the English Houses of Parliament, and carried almost unanimously. On 27th May the Irish Parliament assembled to formally receive the news from the Viceroy, and as an evidence of their gratitude, voted £100,000 supplies for the English navy and £50,000 to Henry Grattan. Thus was secured the independence of the Irish Legislature.

The Volunteers after this, being deserted by their aristocratic leaders, gradually became a democratic institution; and now a social cataclysm, which shook Europe to its foundations, exercised the popular mind. Goaded to frenzy by the tyranny of a corrupt and irresponsible oligarchy, the French people—the most refined nation in Europe—rose in insurrection against their oppressors, and casting aside the restraints of civilization, committed excesses which appalled and horrified Christianity. The ancient government, enervated by a long unfettered sway of despotic power, was overthrown by one of the most sanguinary revolutions on record.

Inspired by the new and specious doctrines of liberty, equality, and fraternity, the Irish, smarting under a sense of cruel injustice, formed the society of "United Irishmen," composed principally of the democratic classes, but led by some

members of the aristocracy, who had imbibed democratic ideas. Republican opinions grew more and more prevalent, and in many parts of the country there was avowed and manifest sympathy with the French revolutionists.

In 1794 Pitt entered on a course of conciliation, in pursuance of which he sent Lord Fitzwilliam as Viceroy, but this new departure was of but short duration, and the popular Viceroy was recalled in the course of a few months. The United Irishmen now became a revolutionary and secret society, having for its object the establishment of an independent government in Ireland by the assistance and protection of France. Their schemes were perfected in 1796, and on 16th Dec, in that year a fleet of 43 ships with 15,000 troops and 45,000 stand of arms, sailed from Brest for Ireland. This formidable armada met with the fate which befel nearly all its predecessors—it was dispersed and scattered by a storm without even effecting a landing upon the Irish coasts.

In the following year negotiations were again opened with France by the Irish leaders, but they only resulted in vague promises of assistance. By 1798, arrangements were completed for a simultaneous rising all over the country, but the Government was in the secret, and on the 12th March, Thomas Addis Emmet and a number of other leaders were arrested in Bridge-street and committed to Newgate. A few weeks later Lord Edward Fitzgerald was arrested in Thomas-street after a desperate struggle in which he was so severely wounded that he died a few days afterwards. Other arrests followed, and before the preconcerted time for action had arrived, nearly all the leaders had been captured by the Government. The country was now in arms, but the movement, deprived of its leaders, was irregular and disorganised, and reduced to a series of sporadic outbreaks by an illiterate and semi-armed peasantry. The fighting commenced in the month of May in Kildare and Carlow, and at the close of the month the insurgents were defeated and routed at the battle of Tara. At Oulart Hill in Wexford the insurgents were successful, and annihilated an entire detachment of the North Cork Militia. They were again successful at Gorey and New Ross, but defeated

at Arklow. They now fixed their camp on Vinegar Hill, and on 21st June General Lake, with a strong force, advanced to attack them, and partly surrounded the hill. After about an hour and a half fighting the insurgents broke up and fled in disorder. This defeat crushed the movement in the south.

Meanwhile the rising was proceeding in the North, and the Irish were defeated at Antrim after a desperate struggle, and again at Ballinahinch. After some slight further flickering the Rebellion was practically extinguished by the end of June. It, no doubt, smouldered on for some years after this in remote and inaccessible parts of the country, notably in the fastnesses of the Dublin and Wicklow mountains.

After the Rebellion came the usual trials and executions, and most of the popular leaders who were unable to make good their escape suffered on the scaffold. Towards the end of August, when the excitement had partly subsided, three French frigates, with 1,000 men and a quantity of arms, landed in Killala, under command of General Humbert, and took possession of the town. They were soon reinforced by numbers of the insurgents. General Lake, in command of 5,000 troops, advanced to attack them, but was decisively defeated near Castlebar on August 27th, and his whole force broken up and pursued for

miles from the scene of action. Humbert now rapidly advanced by an irregular route Northwards, but was finally defeated and forced to surrender by an overwhelming force in county Longford.

Shortly afterwards a fleet of ten vessels was despatched by France in aid of Humbert, but they were intercepted by an English squadron near Lough Swilly, and after a terrific engagement on 12th October, 1798, were completely defeated, and five of the vessels captured.

On the 21st May, 1800, Lord Castlereagh introduced the Union Bill in the Irish House of Commons, and on the 7th June it was passed, and the House met for the last time.

On 1st January, 1801, the new Imperial standard known as the "Union Jack," composed of the crosses of St Patrick, St Andrew, and St George, was hoisted from the battlements of Dublin Castle, Great Britain and Ireland became one kingdom, and the representation of Ireland was transferred to the central Parliament in London.

In 1803 an abortive attempt at insurrection was made by the unfortunate Robert Emmet, who, with other leaders, was executed shortly afterwards. In 1829 was passed the Catholic Emancipation Act, and the Catholics, after centuries of oppression, took their rightful position as free subjects of the Empire.



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